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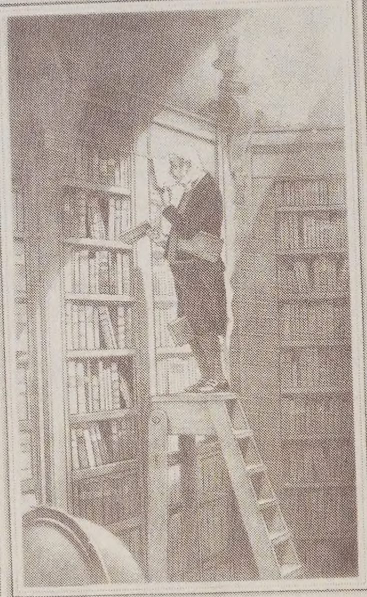

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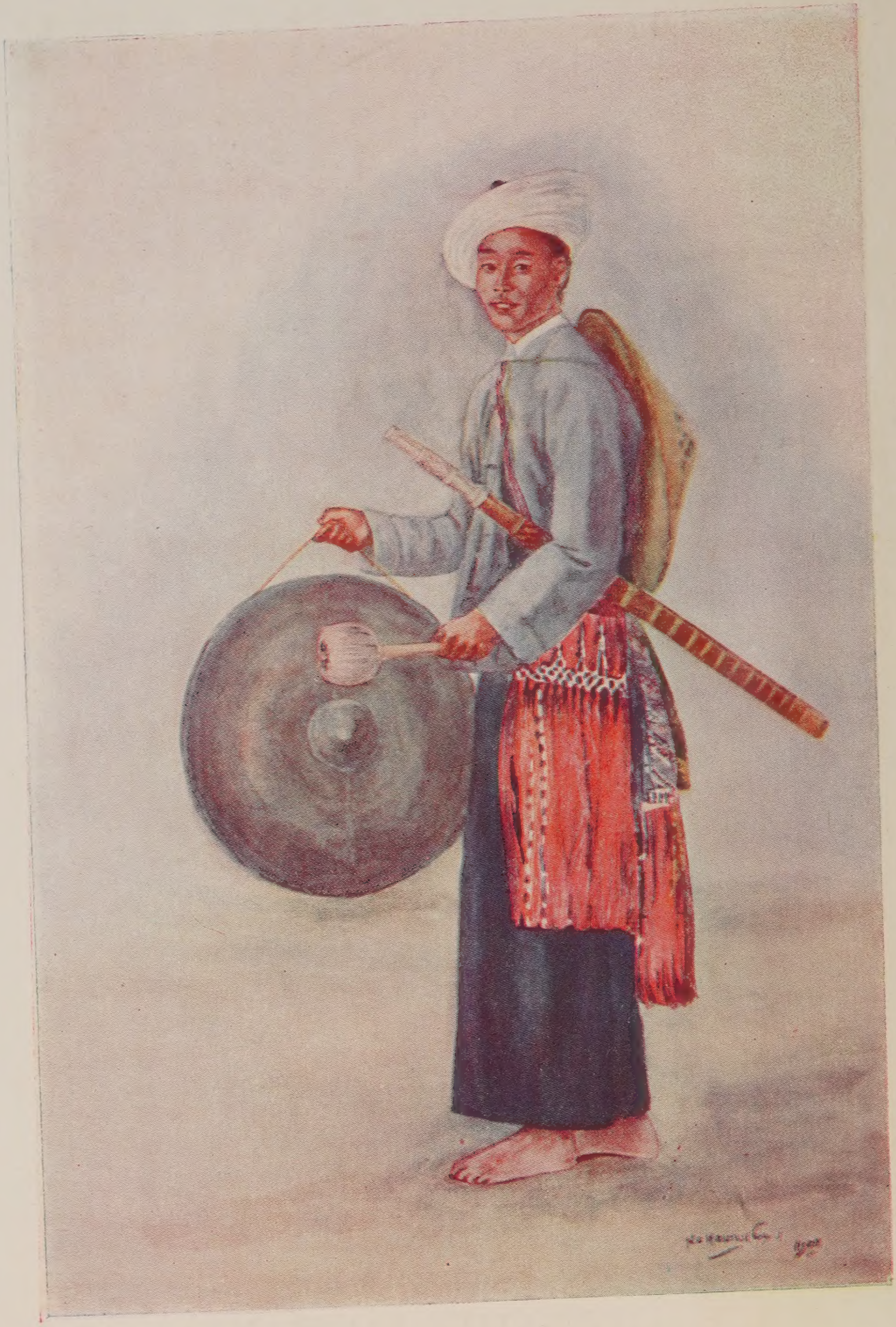

A KACHIN NATIVE IN GALA DRESS.

The Kachins are passionately fond of gongs. A deep musical boom is heard all night long in their villages throughout the festival season.

A
BURMESE ARCADY

AN ACCOUNT OF A LONG & INTIMATE SOJOURN AMONGST THE MOUNTAIN DWELLERS OF THE BURMESE HINTERLAND & OF THEIR ENGAGING CHARACTERISTICS AND CUSTOMS &c., &c.

BY

MAJOR C. M. ENRIQUEZ
KACHIN RIFLES
Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society

> "*Arcadia was inhabited by a hill race of shepherds and huntsmen, who worshipped Pan, Hermes, and other primitive Gods of Nature.*"
> ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA.

WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS & A MAP

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THIS
BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
TO THE
3/70TH KACHIN RIFLES
IN TOKEN
OF MY ADMIRATION FOR THE UNFAILING
COURAGE AND CHEERINESS OF
THE KACHIN SOLDIER

PREFACE

THE early history of Burma is the story of immigrations of the races now occupying it. The memory of those movements is lost and forgotten, but echoes survive in legend; and language-affinities have been discovered which, as our knowledge advances, link various peoples into definite groups. From such materials only is it possible to reconstruct the story of these extraordinary immigrations; and nothing is more romantic than the resurrection, under science, of history long faded from the memory of man. The whole fabric in this case is still guesswork, but the stage now reached has the appearance of strong probability, and goes far towards explaining the occurrence of the various races whose distribution at first appears incomprehensible.

For many years Tibet was considered the home of the Burmese and allied races; but this theory has now given place to the opinion that the migrations of them all originated in Western China, in some undefined region between the sources of the Yangtze and Hoang-Ho rivers. The ancestors of the present Mongolian population of Burma proceeded thence in three distinct and separate waves of allied races—races which are linked by language, and whose present distribution, at first apparently haphazard, is, in the light of our theory, more or less intelligible.

These waves in their order were:

First, Mon-Khmer (Talaing, Wa, Palaung, Palé, Riang, En and Annimite).

Second, Tibeto-Burman, in three streams (Chin, Pyu-Burmese-Kachin and Lolo).

Third, Tai-Chinese (Shan, Siamese and Karen).

The Mon-Khmer invasion was the first great eruption from Central Asia into the Indo-Chinese peninsula. Its main line of advance was south down the Mekong Valley into Cambodia and Siam, whence, by a lateral westward movement, it reached Burma and spread thinly over it. Subsequently it was forced back upon itself by later Burmese invasions, and its members (Wa, Palaung, Palé, Riang, En and Talaing) are found now in isolated pockets all down the south-east frontiers of Burma.

The Tibeto-Burman invasion left the Yangtze and Hoang-Ho basins in a westerly direction, breaking into several branches, of which one reached Tibet, and another turned south and overran Burma in three main streams—Chin, Pyu-Burmese-Kachin and Lolo. Being concerned in this book chiefly with the Kachins, we will consider their case in detail later on. The Chin stream, taking the line of the Chindwin, distributed itself along the mountains down the whole length of Burma on its western side. The Lolo took the Mekong and Salween routes, and is found principally in China. It has entered only the extreme eastern edge of what is now Burma, being represented down the north-east frontier by scattered communities of Lisu (Yawyin), Lahu (Muhso), Kwi, Kaw and Ako. It is a curious fact that the modern language of the

Muhso is extremely like the archaic Pyu. The major part of the Tibeto-Burman wave, however, took the central or Irrawaddy route during the early part of our era, and developed at a later date (about the ninth century A.D.) into the Burmese. At first, however, they were simply nomad tribes, like Pyu, Kamran and Sak, who had no cohesion; and in their southward movement down the N'Mai Hka Valley left derelict settlements in their wake, such as Marus, Lashis, Atsis, Hpoms and Kadus, through whom it may be possible one day to ascertain more clearly the story of their advance. It was, however, a successful advance. They may have encountered Shans, but if so these were mere eddies of a later wave which was to overrun Upper Burma in their rear. They certainly encountered the Mon-Khmer, who had over-extended, and who retired south until at Prome they, in the persons of Talaings, were sufficiently concentrated to offer successful resistance. The Pyu founded a capital at Prome at the beginning of our era. The struggle ebbed and flowed along the Prome line until at last the Pyu, and others, were thrown back north. These are the first incidents that even legend has preserved. Driven north, the Pyu founded a new capital at Păgan, consolidated, and eventually vanished, emerging again (phœnix-wise) to new life as Burmans.

The later history of Burma is simply the logical development of these primeval events. Up to the eighteenth century the Burmese and Talaing (modern incarnations of the old Tibeto-Burmans and Mon-Khmers) swayed to and fro across the length of Burma in bloody wars; while in the north a similar struggle was in progress between Burmans and Shans (Tibeto-Burmans and Tia-Chinese). That is the history of Burma in a nutshell, and it has its origin away back in the mists of time. The old animosities survive.

The Burmese now number about eight millions. The group includes Arakanese, Tavoyans, and comparatively insignificant and dwindling races such as the Intha, Taungyo and Danu of the Southern Shan States, the Kădu of Katha, the Tăman of Chindwin, the Yaw of Pakokku, the Mro and Chaungtha of Arakan, and the Yabein of Pegu.

The Tai-Chinese wave, the last of the primeval movements, proceeded, so far as the Shans are concerned, from the regions of Tali Fu, where existed the Shan state of Nan-chao. This wave (of which one branch overran Siam) passed right across Upper Burma into Assam and Eastern Bengal and when it ebbed left isolated Shan communities high and dry in Hkamti, Chindwin, Myitkyina and Bhamo, as well as in Lower Burma. We shall consider them in detail elsewhere.

The Chinese origin of the Karens is now accepted. The Census Report of 1911 states that the Karens probably "came from the cradle of nearly all Indo-Chinese races — the highlands of Western China. They *preceded* the main migration of Shans. Peacefully, quietly, unobtrusively they moved, avoiding all contact with the tribes they passed." Entering Burma at a point near Karen-ni, in the Southern Shan States, they "followed the line of least resistance, preferring the hardships and obstacles of hills, jungles and uninhabited regions to the dangers of conflict with fellow-beings. Their movements have left no impression on the histories of other races." This same aloofness is characteristic of the Karens to-day. They have still no history, and have never produced distinguished leaders. Under this group are included Karen, Taungthu, Karen-ni (Red Karens), Karen-net (Black Karens), Karen-byu (White Karens), Zayein, Sinsin, Bre, Mano, Yimbaw and Padaung.

Migrations are not necessarily a sudden exodus of a people. They may constitute quickly succeeding and irresistible waves, followed, or preceded, by centuries of slow shifting of individuals and families impelled by economic causes of which they are but dimly conscious. They move like water over dust—creeping here, running to fill a hollow there, or rushing for a little down an easy incline. Nor are these movements by any means finished yet. The Kachins, whom we are about to examine, were no doubt arrested half-way, perhaps by the Shan wave across their path, and they poured into Burma only two or three centuries ago. They moved finally in a south-easterly direction across Upper Burma, driving out the Palaungs till British Annexation in 1885, and the movement, in spite of every discouragement, is still in motion towards the Northern Shan States. Chinese are entering Burma from two directions. A distinct Miao immigration is in progress. There were Lahu movements in 1887, and just now Tai Hkawng are entering Northern Hsenwi from China for the first time. A noticeable inflow of Yawyins (Lisu) occurred into Mogok in 1907, and into Ahkyang

(Putao) in 1920; and the Karens are also in motion, notably in Tavoy and Mergui, the direction of their march being always to the south. Within our times Chin tribes have vanished, and others disappeared and re-entered our territories elsewhere. Some of these, like the Thado, Hwelngos, etc., seem to have turned lately in their tracks and migrated towards the north—a very rare occurrence in Burma. Under British rule these movements have to be peaceable, but wherever there is space they are in progress. The prohibition of opium cultivation might well lead to the sudden disappearance of Lisu from Burma. On the other hand, British rule appeals strongly to these hill-folk. In China they have known something else, though, by the way, the Government of that country is fairly benevolent, provided you give it a wide berth and avoid bandits, official and otherwise. But besides the attraction of peace and order in British territory, their inherent instinct (and very strong it seems to be with all races in Burma) is to move south, or at least in a southerly direction. We can, however, discuss the individual cases of some of these people later in the chapters dealing specially with them. It is only necessary here to review the general trend of immigration in which each member has played its own little part.

This book is devoted chiefly to the Kachins, who, as we have seen, belong to the Tibeto-Burman Group. It is sufficient to point out, by way of introduction, that the Kachins are a hill-people, who now occupy the north-east frontier of Burma and the territory in Yünnan immediately adjacent.

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A BURMESE ARCADY

CHAPTER I

THE STORY OF THE KACHINS

THAT the Kachins are of Mongolian origin is evident both from their physical features and their language. They, and their neighbours, are obscure members of our wonderful Empire of whom little is known, and it will be convenient perhaps to attempt a brief explanation at the outset, before proceeding to more personal and intimate affairs.

The name *Chinghpaw*, which is what the Kachins call themselves, simply means "a man," and those Kachins who have a good opinion of themselves are fond of a saying: "All Chinghpaws are men, but all men are not Chinghpaws."

The word *Kachin*, by which these people are known in Burma, is said to be a corruption of the Chinese name *Ye-yen*, or *Yeh-jen*, and means "savages." Possibly the terms *Chin* and *Shan* are also derived from *Jen*. The Kachins themselves have applied this same Chinese name, *Ye-yen* (savages), to the Lisu, corrupting it to *Yawyin*. The polite Chinese name for the Kachins is *Shan-t'ou*, or "hill-tops."

The Shans call them *Hkang*, which again means "savages," and once more the Kachins have passed the compliment on, this time to the Chins, whom they call *Hkang*. This word in Chin Bok simply means "man." The Marus call the Kachins *Hpaukwaw*, and the Lashis call them *Hpok.* Some people are anxious to see the Kachins spoken of officially as *Chinghpaws*, but the name by which they are known to the world is certainly Kachin.

Nothing certain is known of the early history of the Kachins, though tradition preserves the memory of an ancient home on a "flat-topped hill," the *Majoi Shingra Bum* (Naturally Flat Mountain), which was perhaps some Central Asian plateau. The Kachins are of the same stock as the Burmese, but owing to the isolated territory they have had to occupy, as well as to the fact that they finished their migration much later, they remain truer to the original type than the Burmese, who have been subject to many foreign influences. Their journey would seem to have been arrested half-way for several centuries. Hanson appears to be correct in thinking that they did not finally settle down in their present home until two or three centuries ago.[1] Anderson's observations also confirm this.[2] He says: "The Shans informed us that two hundred years ago Kakhyens (Kachins) were unknown in the Sanda and Hotha valleys." A summary of Hanson's well thought-out argument is as follows[3]:—

"For centuries the Jinghpaw families had been living on the border-land between Assam, China and Northern Burma. When they first occupied that territory is mere conjecture. There they lived and multiplied, always eager to break through the wall and occupy the land farther south. But the *Naturally Level Mountain* cannot be located here, and we must look still farther north for the birthplace of the race. This must be sought amongst the highlands of Mongolia, and on the border-land of Eastern Tibet and Western Szchuan. Here stood the cradle not only of the Kachins, but also of the Burmans and other Mongolian tribes. At a remote period the Burmans began to move south, and laid the foundations of mighty kingdoms. Later, smaller tribes like the Chins, Nagas and Lahus followed in their wake, the Kachins holding a central position. The Naga tribes, following the Patkoi range, settled down amongst those high hills.[4] The Lahus, keeping to the east of the Salween, seem to have been permitted to move peacefully southward. But the Jinghpaws (Kachins) in the centre, aiming for more valuable acquisitions, were for a long time kept back by the strong Shan rulers in Assam and Yünnan. They were compelled to live in the land of the 'four rivers'[5] until opportunity presented itself for a new advance. As the Yünnan Shans lost their grip, and the Ahom kings became weak, the Kachins began to move some three centuries ago. The conquest of the whole region between the Hkamti and Hukong valleys, as far south as to the Mogaung river, followed in due time.[6] The Shans and Burmans were driven out, and only the ruins of their pagodas, the trees they planted round their monasteries, and the names of their villages remain to tell the story. Having advanced as far south as the Mogaung and Katha districts, the Kachins encountered more organized resistance, and found further progress in that direction impossible. They consequently turned east into the hills on the other side of the Irrawaddy. Crossing that river north of Myitkyina, they soon became masters of the whole country between the Irrawaddy and the Salween, except where they were unable to hold the valleys ruled by the Chinese. The La, Shan, Palaung and Chinese hill population receded farther and farther south. The rich Shan valleys became tributaries to the Kachin mountain chiefs, and had it not been for the British occupation many of them would have shared the fate of the Hukong."

With regard to the linguistic connection between Tibetans and Kachins, Hanson and Davies have collected lists of words showing a close similarity.[7] In both languages the word for a "road" is *lam*, and for an "ear" *na*. In Burmese the word for a "road" is *lan*, but it is spelt *lam* with a "ma-that." The Kachin words *sha* (to eat), *nga* (a fish) and *gwi* (a dog) are very close to the corresponding Tibetan words *sa*, *nya* and *kyi*. The Burmese word for a "dog," *kwe*, in its archaic form was *kwi.*[8] The resemblance of these and other words is striking, and there is also a close connection between Burmese and Kachin.[9] The marked resemblance between certain Kachin and Chin words is discussed elsewhere.[10]

The only scientific investigation into the origin of the peoples of Burma that has, as far as I know, been carried out has been on purely philological lines. Anthropologically nothing has yet been done: and though in this case language seems to be a safe guide, one must bear in mind the facility with which primitive people change their speech,[11] and remember Huxley's warning that "if languages may be transferred from one stock to another without any corresponding intermixture of blood, what ethnological value has philology?"[12] There remains, therefore, much to be done, but I believe that anthropological research will confirm what philology has indicated.

The Tibetan and Kachin languages, though of the same stock, belong to different branches of it. The parent of all these languages, which we call "Turanian," is believed to have been some ancient Mongolian tongue, from which are derived three groups—namely, the Tibetan Group, the Chinese Group and the Burmese Group.

Modern Tibetan, Nagar and Lepcha are the children of the Tibetan Group. The Chinese Group gave birth, amongst many others, to Shan, Siamese, Palaung, Talaing and Karen.[13] Both the above groups remain to this day highly tonal, whereas the Burmese Group (including Kachin), though still partly tonal, is in process of dropping its tones. This is why Shan and Yünnanese are so much more tonal than modern Burmese and Kachin.

To the "Burmese Group" belong, amongst other languages, Burmese, Arakanese, Maru, Lashi, Atsi, Lisu, Kachin and Chin.

In Burma, members of the Chinese and Burmese families, after various wanderings, have settled down side by side, so that Burmese and Shans, though now close neighbours with related languages, are in fact only distant cousins—the one having come from somewhere in China, and the other probably from the basin of the Yangtze.[14] About one-fourth of the Kachin vocabulary is monosyllabic, the rest being mainly dissyllabic.[15] The Kachins have no difficulty in creating new words. The method by which the vocabulary is expanded to meet fresh needs can be illustrated best by a few examples:

Tsi means "medicine"; *măkai* means "a bundle"; *tsi-măkai* (a newly coined word) means a "first field-dressing."

Shing means "the back"; *măgap* means "to cover"; *shing-măgap* (a newly coined word) means a "spine-pad."

A number of these new composite words will be found in my *Kachin Military Terms*.[16] The language is really much more extensive than is generally supposed. It has a vocabulary of fifteen thousand words, and includes a whole system of poetic and religious phraseology. It is, as explained, only slightly tonal, but there are certain well-marked tones used for expressing "distance," "annoyance," "surprise" or "greeting" which are most peculiar. Anyone will note the curiously caressing *m'law* or *ma law* with which Kachins bid adieu.

The newest languages of the Burmese Group are Atsi and Lashi. According to Hanson,[17] the Marus spread through the hills after the Kachins had settled down. Intercourse between Marus and Lahpai-Kachins has produced the Atsi tribe and the Atsi language. From the intermarriage of Atsi and Maran-Kachins has proceeded Lashi.

Close association of Maru, Atsi and Lashi with Kachins has certainly resulted in transformation. A much greater antiquity is, however, claimed for them in the Census Report of 1911, where it is suggested that Maru, Atsi, Lashi, and also Maingtha, may have entered Burma down the N'mai Hka Valley as part of the *main* Tibeto-Burman immigration, and that they may be a remnant of that movement which was somehow detached and isolated. The Atsi and Lashi, it is suggested, are branches of the Maru. So complete, however, is the amalgamation with Kachins that Atsi now consider themselves a section of the Lahpai. The Gauris, who speak a Kachin dialect, are certainly closely allied.

Some light is thrown on the Maru in paragraph 63 of the *Archæological Report* for 1916. The learned author says: "I am more than ever convinced of a close connection between Burmese and Lolo, and have framed rules of phonetic equations between Burmese and Maru, which show these two languages so nearly connected as to be practically the same. This confirms the tentative opinion already advanced that the Marus may be a remnant left by the Burmese in their migration into Burma from the north."

The Kachins we know best inhabit the North-East Frontier of Burma between the Irrawaddy and the Chinese border from latitude 27 to 23.[18] But they also spread east beyond these areas into Yünnan, and north into the Triangle (or Sinlawng) between the N'Mai and Mali Hka rivers. This is the true Hkahku, or "Up-river country." The Triangle is unadministered. Westward they extend across the plains of Bhamo and Katha, and into great Kachin strongholds in the Hukong Valley and towards Assam. We know very little about the Hukong Valley. South they extend into the Kodaung tracts of Mogok, and into the Northern Shan States and Lashio, where they occupy the hills over above the Shan plains. There are a few Kachins as far south as Keng Tung, but they are not numerous.

According to the Census Report of 1911, there are 239,953 Kachins in Burma, but there are, of course, a great many more who live in Yünnan. They are divided into five main families—namely, Marip, Lahtaw, Lahpai, N'Hkum and Maran. There are besides a vast number of sub-families, such as Hpaulu, Lazing, Dinggrin, Changma, Hkangda, Labang, Labya, and so on, but these are not aristocratic families like the five main ones, though they are all in some degree related.

Individual Kachins get their names by adding a "sequence" name to the family name. The sequence names are *Gam*, *Naw*, *La*, *Tu*, *Tong*, *Yaw* and *Hka*. They are given to sons in their order of birth, and were originally the names of seven principal *Nats*, and also of the seven sons of Wahkyet Wa, the mythical father of the Kachin race. The sequence names have each recognized pet names assigned to them. Thus Gams are affectionately called *Brang*, Naws *Bok*, and Tangs *Gun*. A little boy is usually called *Ma*, or "child." Thus the eldest son of a Lazing family is called *Ma Gam* while he is small, and *Lazing Gam* when he grows up. A recruit invariably describes himself as *Gam* or *Naw*, and it needs a second question to reveal the fact that he is a *Lahtaw Kăsha*, or "child of the Lahtaw."

The various tribes each inhabit a distinct area, or set of scattered areas, and are jealous of their boundaries. Thus north of Sinlum is a Gauri area, east of it a Maran area, and south of it a Lahtaw area. Some tribes, such as Atsis and Yawyins, are more scattered than others, but even scattered communities consist of compact groups of villages. Yet in spite of these general distributions considerable mixing has taken place as the result of local migration. Stray villages have intruded, and several tribes are often found sharing one village. This has usually occurred with the sanction of the community concerned, who may, for instance, have assigned land in their midst to a tribe with whom they have marriage connections. A small amount of shifting is always taking place, so that the population has the appearance of being more mixed up than it really is.

There is a common misconception amongst Europeans with regard to the existence of Kachin tribes. There is, as a matter of fact, hardly any tribal feeling amongst the Kachins, except in connection with property and boundaries, and the reason for this is that they consider themselves divided into families rather than into tribes. The so-called five main tribes (Marip, Lahtaw, Lahpai, N'Hkum and Maran) are really five aristocratic families descended from the five eldest sons of Wahkyet Wa, the reputed father of the Kachin race. Their order of precedence is as given above, the Marips being the senior family. Any man with one or other of these names may be regarded as well born; and *Duwas*, or "chiefs," always belong to these families. Other clans are subsections of the five main ones, or are in some degree related to them. A man may not marry into a family bearing the same family name.

Every Kachin family knows exactly with what families it may intermarry. Amongst the five aristocratic families Marips take their brides from Marans,

Marans from N'Hkums, N'Hkums from Lahpais, Lahpais from Lahtaws, and Lahtaws from Marips. This, however, is only a very broad statement. The subsections of nearly every clan have modifications of the marriage rules peculiar to themselves. No European, as far as I know, has ever understood them, and certainly no Kachin does. A discussion of marriage laws usually becomes heated. In the case of *Duwas* the rule is further modified, because there are no longer any Marip *Duwas*; and with commoners there are many minor exceptions amongst individual families. The rules are, however, not as rigidly enforced now as they used to be.

The five main clans are subdivided. Thus the Lahpai, who are probably the largest family of all, are classified as Krawn (found near Sadon), Lakhum, Sumhprawng, Shadan, and Atsi Lukmyang (Stone Horse). Of these, the Shadan Lahpais are the most important. They are widely distributed, but are conspicuous in Sima, Sadon and the Triangle.

Several minor Kachin families are found thinly spread amongst the rest. Their classification is obscure, but they claim descent from brothers of the mythical Wahkyet Wa. The most important are the Nang of Sima; Kareng, or Udi, of Sadon and Sima; the Chang-mǎja, also found in Sadon and Sima; Malang, Labang, Sha-numla or Munchi-numla, and the Layang of Grau-gra (near Seniku). There are others besides. Certain racial peculiarities seem to persist. For instance, the N'Hkum are often dark, and the Chang-măja have a tendency to curly hair.

The Kachins can hardly be said to have any religion at all. They are simply animists, or spirit worshippers; or, as we say in Burma, *Nat* worshippers. They rarely understand their own theology, which is left to the *Jaiwas*, or "priests." Even the *Jaiwas* have not time now to commit long passages to memory, and much of the original myth has been forgotten. Kachin beliefs regarding life, and the state after death, recorded below, were explained to me by Father Gilhodes, who is an authority to whom the *Jaiwas* themselves sometimes refer.

The Kachin believes himself composed of a body, and of one or more spirits, of which one spirit is the principal, or Ego. The body and spirit are not one, but merely companions, united, but each having a personality of its own. The spirit is immortal, and free to leave the body permanently at death, or temporarily during life in states of sleep, dreams, or semi-consciousness. Hence Kachins when asleep may quite possibly be parted in body and spirit. For this reason they dislike being suddenly roused without time, as it were, to collect themselves.

The post-mortem state depends not on good or evil deeds in life, but on the circumstances of death—that is, whether death is natural, violent, in child-birth, or when mad. Those who die natural deaths travel to a region called *Nun Nun Wam Wam Ga* or *Tsu Ga* (spirit land), which is placed in the north near the mountain of *Majoi Shingra Bum*, the original home of the Kachin tribes, where the Irrawaddy is supposed to rise. Here live their ancestors. The Kachin's idea of Paradise seems to be reunion with ancestors, and a return to their original home. Life there is very much like the present life—an idea perhaps suggested to their simple minds by the visions they have in dreams of their dead in the earthly state in which they knew them.

The ceremony of finally dismissing the spirit on its journey is sometimes deferred till several months after death. The traveller is supplied with money, which is placed in the mouth of the corpse. The spirit is then carefully directed on its journey by the *Dumsa*, or priest, who recites step by step the names of rivers, bridges and mountains to be passed on the way back to that ancestral home from which the Kachin tribes originated. A close study of this ghostly journey, and the growth of our own geographical knowledge, may possibly enable us some day to solve the secret of the origin of the Kachins.

The *Duwas* (chiefs), unlike the *Darat ni* (commoners), go to a place called *Tawng Sing Kawng Ga*, which appears not to be located far away in the north, but rather to be the actual tomb, or its vicinity. Here the dead rejoin their ancestors. If not made happy and contented, the spirit troubles the people until it is properly at rest.

Men who die unnatural deaths from accident or violence go to a region called *Lasa Ga*. Women who die in child-birth and children born dead go to a sort of Hades called *N Dang Ga*. From these unfortunate states they may be released by sacrifices of pigs and buffaloes offered by relatives to the Sawan and Lasa *Nats*.

These *Nats* then permit the spirit to cross *Zaibru Chet*, the "Sandy Pass," where the mountain-tops are lost in clouds, and where, after scaling the heights by ladders, the dead rejoin their ancestors. (It is a curious fact that the Karens also have a legend about having crossed "a River of Sand," which Mr Taw Sein Ko believes to be the Desert of Gobi.[19])

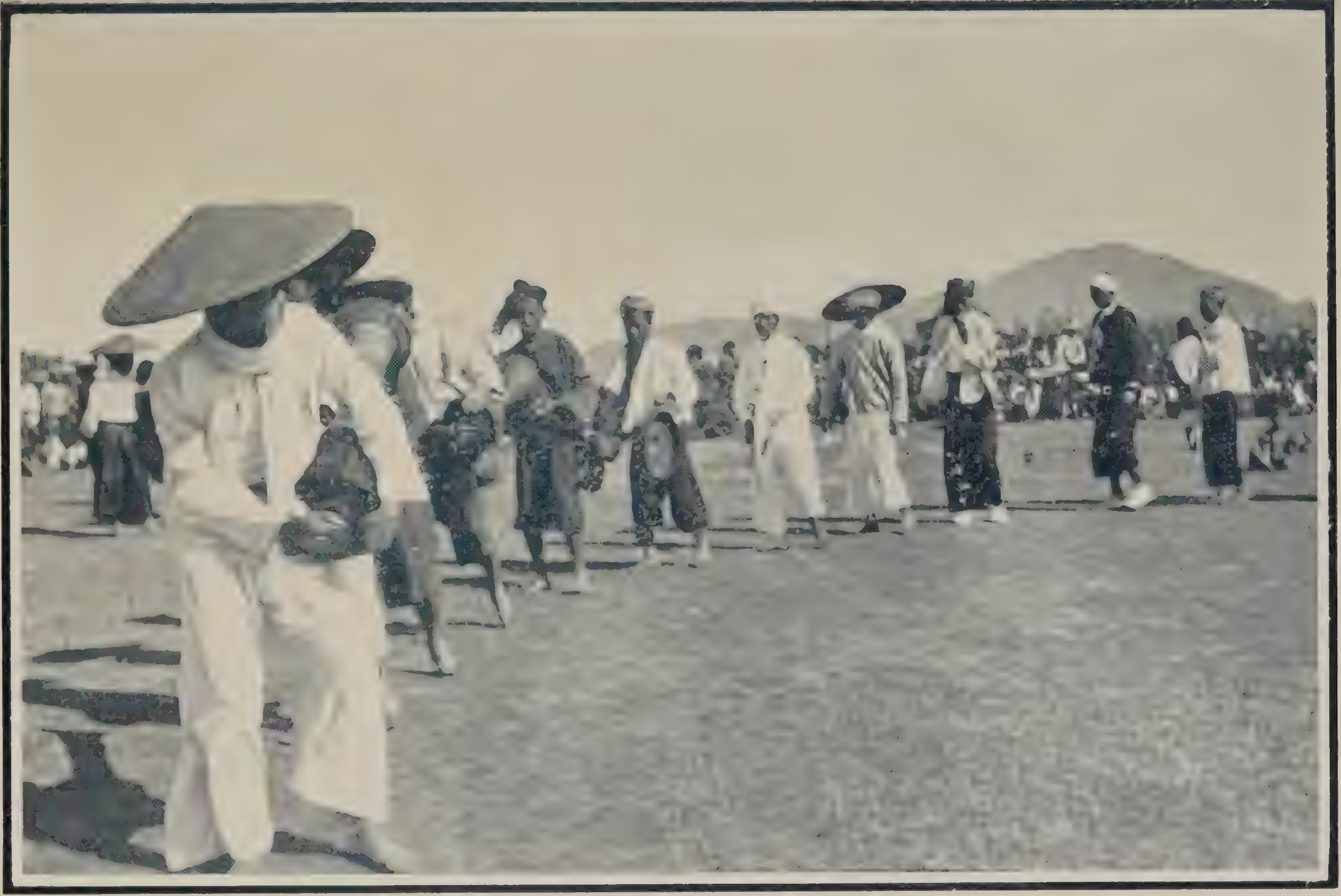
Mad people are buried standing, with a bowl on their heads. They go to a place called *Măna Ga*, from which there is no delivery.

Phallic worship and snake worship no doubt suggest themselves naturally to primitive man in his speculation upon the facts of birth and death. The *Nat* worship of the Kachins, though perhaps an advance on phallic worship (of which traces are observable) is, however, itself little more than a primitive instinct. It has many disadvantages. "*Nat* bites" produce sickness and disease. All *Nats*, even those of ancestors, are more or less hostile. Frequent and expensive sacrifices of bullocks and pigs for the sake of the sick, or to propitiate the *Nats*, result in much waste of money. The *Nat* superstition leads to certain gross practices at dances, and to cruelty when women die in child-birth. This latter calamity is supposed to be due to the dreaded *Nat*, Sawan, and the Kachins are curiously terrified of it. Chillies are burned beside the woman, meteorites or stone axe-heads (which the Kachins believe to be thunderbolts) are laid on her head, and mud pellets made with the water of hailstones are fired into the air to drive off the evil spirits. *Dahs* are flourished and guns fired over and under the woman. Her last hours are a misery, and finally her body is burned and buried amidst rows of phallic symbols. I have mentioned elsewhere that the Kaws of Keng Tung destroy twins in a particularly horrible way.[20] Kachins indulge in no such barbarities, but have a curious aversion to eating bananas stuck together in pairs, which they believe promote a tendency to twins. The Chins, Nagas and Lushais bury a child alive with its mother if she has died in giving it birth; and Kachins have been known to desert babies in the jungle. In the face of all this, the progress of Christianity is welcome, especially as the Kachins have undoubtedly a deep religious sense. Buddhism, unfortunately, never seems to attract them. Its lofty philosophy is, in fact, beyond their understanding.

But even their crude *Nat* worship has a softer side, and is deeply beloved by all those who see amidst the trees and rocks, streams and hills, the deities who preside over their simple homes and dense forests. I doubt whether the Kachins harbour unqualified fear of their *Nats*, without any love for them, as is popularly supposed. The *Gum-gun Gum-hpai ni*, who are included amongst ancestral *Nats*, are certainly kindly, and their protection is invoked on behalf of absent friends.

The word *Nat* is probably derived from the Sanscrit *Nath*, a lord. Amongst the Burmese there are thirty-seven great *Nats*, who have each their own titles, and are spoken of collectively as the *Thonse Hkunit Min*. Most of them are human beings who died violent deaths. The jurisdiction of *Nats* of this class, who have a definite individuality, is often quite local. Their shrines are little matting sheds, or toy houses, raised on posts, and empty, like Shinto shrines, except for perhaps a candle, a vase of leaves or flowers, or some such offering. They have fled from many areas now before the materialism of our age, but in country places are still worshipped by Burman-Buddhists, and have very real power. These are the indigenous *Nats* of the country, who were suffered to remain after the introduction of Buddhism, just as devil worship, Confucianism and Shinto have survived in Tibet, China and Japan.[21] In Burma they are still the only deities of wild tribes like Karens and Kachins who never embraced Buddhism.

There is, however, another class of *Nats*, who appear to be a fanciful or superstitious growth of Buddhism itself, a countless host of spiritual beings inhabiting the six lower abodes of heaven, below the Brahma



A KACHIN DANCE.

Kachins dance to the music of drums and deep-toned gongs. The men perform the motions of reaping with their swords, and the women of winnowing with their fans.

worlds. The highest *Nat* heaven, Tushita, is presided over by a benevolent Being called the *Thagya Min*. These are good *Nats*, who, though still not entirely free from materialism, are yet well advanced on the way to *Neikban*. They correspond with the *Dewa* of Hinduism. The devil of Buddhism is *Mar Nat*, the personification of "pride."

The *Nats* of the Kachins appear to belong to the first, or indigenous, class. They are partly tribal.

A Maru, for instance, who has become a Kachin in his way of living, and in his speech, will say that he has adopted Kachin *Nats* and renounced Maru ones. There is, however, something approaching a Supreme Being, called *Karai Kasang*, who may be said to correspond with the *Thagya Min* of the Burmese. Christian Kachins apply this name to God. Even those who are not Christians speak of the "Will of Karai Kasang," or the "Goodness of Karai Kasang," the Omniscient. The Kachins show no animosity to those amongst them who are Christians, except perhaps close round the Missions, where Christianity sometimes clashes with tribal custom. In recent times a feeling has grown up amongst *Nat*-worshippers against encouraging marriages with Christians, but it probably exists only in conservative circles. The old people naturally find it hard to accommodate themselves to modern innovations.

Several *Nats* visited us in Mesopotamia, where I took a Kachin company during the war. We put the first into the quarter-guard—a most disgraceful affair, as the whole company crowded to the guard tent to greet him. But later we learned to treat them more courteously; for, as an old lady observed when she bowed to the devil in church: "Politeness costs nothing. And, besides, you never know." I made a point of welcoming them personally, and the Kachins were much gratified at this. The *Nat* was always friendly, and magnanimously accepted my apologies for the quarter-guard incident. "Never mind," he said; "you did not know. Your whisky is excellent and I have travelled far—ah! very far—over the seas—what country—sand! sand!" *Nats* presented themselves through a medium, or *Myihtoi.* The word *Myihtoi* means "Eye Enlightened." A *Myihtoi* is usually a nervous or hysterical subject, and I believe his trance, or possession, is produced by self-suggestion or introspection. At least I am sure that, so far as he is concerned, he believes in himself as a medium. He sweats and trembles, cries out and beats his feet on the ground, but is yet dimly conscious of his surroundings. Perhaps he is in a "twilight" or subconscious state. When the *Nat* is fully in possession, questions are asked in a low tone, which the medium answers. *Nats* were thus invoked and consulted several times in Mesopotamia. Their advice was always helpful and encouraging. One advised us not to think too much about home, for, said he, "it will make you weak."

We are apt to jeer at such displays, because whisky and money undoubtedly propitiate the *Nat*, and improve his rather uncertain temper. It must, however, be remembered that *Nats* are not only spiteful and wayward, but even human. The Kachin thinks of them as old men, youths and dwarfs, and spends his whole life bribing them. He even expects to live an entirely material life himself in the next world. The genuineness of the belief of the *Myihtoi* in himself cannot, I think, be doubted. He is a hysterical subject, and I have heard of recent cases where *Myihtois* have died while acting as mediums of the *Nats*.

NOTES

[1] Hanson's *Kachin Dictionary*, p. vii.

[2] Anderson's *Mandalay to Momein*, p. 130.

[3] Hanson's *The Kachins*, pp. 17, 18 and 20.

[4] Map Square C. H.

[5] These rivers are believed to have been the Mali Hka, N'mai Hka (*i.e.* the two head-waters of the Irrawaddy), the Dihing and the Brahmaputra.

[6] Map Square D. H.

[7] Hanson's *Kachin Dictionary*, p. xvii., and comparative lists in pocket of Davies' *Yünnan*.

[8] Duroiselle.

[9] My *Kachin Military Terms*, items 280, 281, 334, 368, 394, 681, 1390, etc.

[10] My lecture on *Chin Boks*.

[11] *A Burmese Loneliness*, pp. 37 and 38.

[12] Huxley's *Man's Place in Nature*, chap. iv.

[13] *A Burmese Wonderland*, chap. v.

[14] *A Burmese Loneliness*, p. 47.
[15] Hanson's *The Kachins*, p. 28.
[16] Government Press, Rangoon.
[17] Hanson's *Kachin Dictionary*, p. xiii.
[18] Map Square D. H.
[19] *Archæological Survey*, March 1917, para. 51.
[20] *A Burmese Loneliness*, p. 139.
[21] See also Forchhammer's *Jardine Essay*, p. 12.

CHAPTER II

PIONEER WORK

(*See Map Square* D. H.)

CERTAIN soil in its virgin state is naturally rich. It only needs to be turned over and sown with seed to make it extremely productive. Just in that way the simple Kachin mind only requires turning over with the plough of experience, and planting with the seed of new ideas, to awaken it to extraordinary fertility. All who have come in contact with the Kachins of Upper Burma are aware of their quickness and adaptability. The turning over and planting process has been going on now locally, and in a small way, for some years. Officers in every frontier department in Upper Burma have used Kachins, and found their services valuable, their intelligence and aptitude remarkable, and their companionship easy and cheerful in lonely places.

We will now briefly examine the ground-work which made a Kachin military venture possible in 1917.

Captain Hanny, who described Bhamo in about 1835, is believed to have been the first European to visit it. In 1868 Colonel Sladen, with the permission of the Burmese Government, headed a Mission and travelled via Bhamo from Mandalay to Tengyueh with the intention of reopening this trade route which, by reason of the Panthay rebellion, Burmese oppression, and Kachin lawlessness, had then almost fallen into disuse.

The Kachins, egged on by the Burmese officials at Bhamo, offered every possible obstruction to the Mission. By refusing transport, demanding rupees, quarrelling over the right to loot the baggage, and indulging in drunks and *Nat* ceremonies, they delayed progress several days at Ponlyne and several weeks at Ponse.

General Fytche, then Chief Commissioner of British Burma, writes of them irritably as "dirty, ugly, barbarian Kakhyens."[1] The Mission, however, got through to Tengyueh, where they were received with delight by the Panthays, then in the throes of their disastrous rebellion. But besides this, and the accumulation of information regarding the Kachins, little was effected.

Dr Anderson, who accompanied the Mission, and wrote of it, gives a good description of the people and country.[2] One gathers from his book to what extent the Kachins then terrorized Upper Burma with their raids, blackmail and kidnapping. River-side villagers slept in boats for fear of them, and no Kachin was allowed inside the stockades of Bhamo. But the truculence of the Kachins appears to have arisen chiefly from the harsh treatment dealt them by the Burmese and Chinese. In reading those old accounts one is constantly struck by the mention of their hospitality and good humour, which have been able to find wider expression in the happier days that have followed. They facilitated the return of Colonel Sladen's Mission in every way, the tribes now disputing amongst themselves to secure its passage through their territory.

Upper Burma was annexed in 1885, but the remote Kachin Hills were in a state of unrest until long after that. Davis, referring to the Kachins as recently as 1898, speaks of them as "robbers who systematically plundered caravans whenever they got the chance." The post at Sadon in the Myitkyina Hills was only established in 1891-1892, and that at Sima in 1892-1893. The railway was not opened to Myitkyina till 1899. It will be noticed how brief is the period during which the Kachins have been under effective control.

In Bhamo, the Kachin Hills were only visited by punitive columns till 1895. Administration was not attempted until then. A Civil officer was appointed to Sinlum Kaba in 1897, and the frontier posts at Loijé, Alawbum and Panghkam were only completed in 1902. Hospitals, schools, roads and buildings have yet to be developed. Railways there will never be, but from the social point of view roads are better. Railways bring vice. They intensify the struggle for existence. They are a doubtful blessing for simple folk like those who live happy and contented in Upper Burma. Roads, however, are an urgent need. They develop trade, and they break down the barriers of ignorance and local prejudice. Upon them will depend the development of the Burmese frontier.

The suggestion to enlist Kachins in the Upper Burma Military Police Battalion at Bhamo was first made by Captain Erek in 1893, but was not acted upon till 1896-1897. A nucleus was derived from the Civil Police. Mr Rae, ably assisted by several prominent Kachins, obtained recruits from the Lahkum and Maran country along the Bhamo-Namhkam road, and both Gauris and Marus supplied a few men. Since then the military police has done much to enlighten and educate the Kachins, thus paving the way for better things. At a later date there were Kachin companies in the Myitkyina and Lashio battalions, but they were mostly recruited still from Bhamo, and the total number of companies in the military police was only raised to seven during the war.

All this, however, was only a beginning, and the bulk of the Kachins still remain untouched. As a nation their latent qualities have not been awakened. In their remote hills their mental soil has never yet been turned and sown, and the majority remain sunk in profound ignorance and superstition, shut out from the world by their dense jungles. Nothing could be more disheartening than the appearance of a Kachin village. Dirt and squalor are rampant. Half the population, if not more, is diseased. The very ease with which every need is met by the bamboo has in itself prevented the Kachins from progressing beyond a certain stage. In their raw, dirty state they are like crude ore in the ground, a valuable mine for us to draw upon in the years to come.

Nor is the value of this mine properly understood, except perhaps in the army, where we are now keenly alive to it. There is a tendency to discourage interference with frontier tribes. The prejudice of half-a-century, which has blinded us to the qualities of the Burmese and other indigenous races, has blinded us still more to those of the Kachins. Their extreme simplicity has been looked upon as a disability, instead of being recognized as ground specially suitable for development. It is only now that incredulity has been finally silenced by the participation of all these "little people" of Burma in overseas military operations.

A ceaseless struggle with the jungle, a yearly wrestle with undergrowth for ground upon which to raise a bare subsistence, a hard study of forest lore, and an age-long warfare with strong, aggressive neighbours, are all factors which have profoundly influenced the Kachin character, limiting its scope perhaps, and making it suspicious and defiant, but encouraging hardihood and independence, ingenuity and adaptability. Police and military service are proper outlets for these qualities, and where such service has been encouraged by big-minded, far-sighted officials, as in Bhamo, we find Kachins who in twenty years have risen far superior in spirit and intellect to their neighbours.

The year 1890 saw the commencement of a great work—namely, the reduction into writing of the Kachin language, which has no characters of its own. Earlier than this an attempt was made to render it in Burmese characters, but in 1890 Dr Hanson wisely adopted "Roman" letters, and the system he evolved was accepted by Government in 1895. It is supposed that there are now 3000 Kachins who can read and write; and whereas in 1890 there was only 1 Kachin school with 53 pupils, there are now at least 14 schools in Bhamo alone with about 600 pupils. It is no longer true to say that Kachin is an unwritten language. The legend is that when God gave them writing on parchment the Kachins cooked and ate it. Now, however, a regular style of correspondence has grown into daily use. There is an increasing and urgent demand for books, which has led to the translation of several works, including the Bible and *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Burma is fortunate in its missionaries. Fanatics, of course, occur, who profess sympathetic understanding with one breath, and with the next talk nonsense about "Buddhist idols" and the "heathen." Their violent prejudice betrays them, and compares most unfavourably with an impartial statement like Bishop Bigandet's sublime story, *The Life or Legend of Gaudama*. The best missionaries, however, are exceptional men, far-sighted, business-like, and loyally devoted to the education of backward classes. Their political influence is considerable, especially on the frontier and in Lower Burma, and they usually handle their power with tact and discretion. Wherever medical missions have been started an immense blessing has without doubt been bestowed upon the people. I do not personally approve of disturbing a Buddhist in his religious belief, but the teaching of Christianity to border folk who have no religion at all is bound to prove beneficial. Many of our missionaries are students and linguists of exceptional ability. They are the real educating influence all over Burma. To them we owe most of the grammars and dictionaries in the various languages of the country. They have supplied a literature to people like Kachins and Karens who never had any writing before. Lastly, they have helped to cultivate patriotism and a national spirit. The military experiment owes much of its success to missionary support. The fact is that the high standard set by Judson and Bigandet is worthily sustained by men like Hanson, Harper, Nichols, Heptanstal and Gilhodes, to mention only a few.

NOTES

[1] Fytche, *Burma Past and Present*, p. 100.

[2] Anderson's *Mandalay to Momein*, chaps. iii. and iv.

CHAPTER III

A KACHIN MILITARY VENTURE

IN the beginning God made the heaven and the earth, and distributed benefits to mankind. The Creation, however, was imperfect. When gold was given out the Kachins took large baskets to remove it in, but, mistaking the day, received a superfluity of *Nats*, or godlings, instead. The *Nats* escaped, and have haunted the hills and rivers ever since. The Karens got practically nothing but missionaries, and the Chins missed the day for clothes altogether. The Burmese never rolled up at all, and when God asked about it He was told they were at the *Pwe*.[1] "Oh, well," said He, "let them stop there."

Thus the world began with misunderstandings which have taken some little time to rectify. For instance, it was supposed, till quite recently, that a certain instability of character, and a dislike of routine and monotony, unfitted the Burmese for military employment; while the less educated tribes in the frontier hills round about were thought to be too shy and ignorant to make good soldiers. This theory amounted almost to a fetish. But a generation has now grown up which is bound no longer by those old shibboleths. The experience gained since the army was thrown open in 1917 to Burmese, Kachins, Karens, Shans, Chins and other indigenous Burmese races has shown the utter unsoundness of these old ideas.

The Kachins took a leading part in our military experiment, and though only a "little people," were the first indigenous unit of infantry to enter an overseas war zone. It was a great venture, and to understand what it must have meant to embark upon it one must realize that the way was beset in the Kachin imagination with vague, nameless terrors. It was a decision that each individual had to make for himself without help, because service was strictly voluntary. It is well to reflect a little upon the strength of mind that such a decision must have entailed. The Kachin's world is his village and the deep forests surrounding it, and beyond that there are small towns like Bhamo, Myitkyina and Lashio, where they had served for a very few years in irregular battalions of military police. The recruit when he enlists comes into contact, perhaps for the first time, with a white *Duwa.*[2] The recruiting officer straightway palms off on him the first paper money he has ever seen, places him on the first river steamer, and subjects him to the deadly sickness which often attends his first railway journey. Their decision to take part in the Great War was therefore a plunge into the unknown. They had to enter a new service, and a strange, friendless world, full of unimaginable dangers. A lead was given by Naik Ujik La, a man from the Myitkyina district. His name deserves to be recorded. It should be borne in mind that the first Kachin company of military police was raised in Bhamo only as recently as 1898. Other companies in Myitkyina and Lashio were not raised until much later, and, as already mentioned, the number of companies was only increased from three to seven during the war. The employment of Kachins, even as military policemen, is therefore a comparatively recent experiment.

Then in March 1916 a few of these Kachin military policemen were taken to Maymyo and trained with the 10th Gurkhas. The credit of having opened the way for the Kachins into the Indian Army lies chiefly with Major Burd. Their status was still that of military police, but it was the initial step and the most important one. This small band became the nucleus of the first *regular* Kachin company, which I had the honour to command, and which, together with a Burmese company under Captain Gould, formed an indigenous wing in the 85th Burma Rifles when it was raised on the 15th July 1917.

After that date events moved rapidly. The regiment, which began to assemble on the 15th July, sailed for Mesopotamia on the 30th of the same month. It landed in Basra on the 15th August, when the shade temperature was 120°, and the

"Date Cooker" was blowing up hot and humid from the Persian Gulf. One poor lad fell dead of heat as he came ashore. The men lived sixteen together for more than a year in single-fly 160-pounder tents. They were worse off in this respect than other troops, who nearly all had double-fly "E.P." tents.

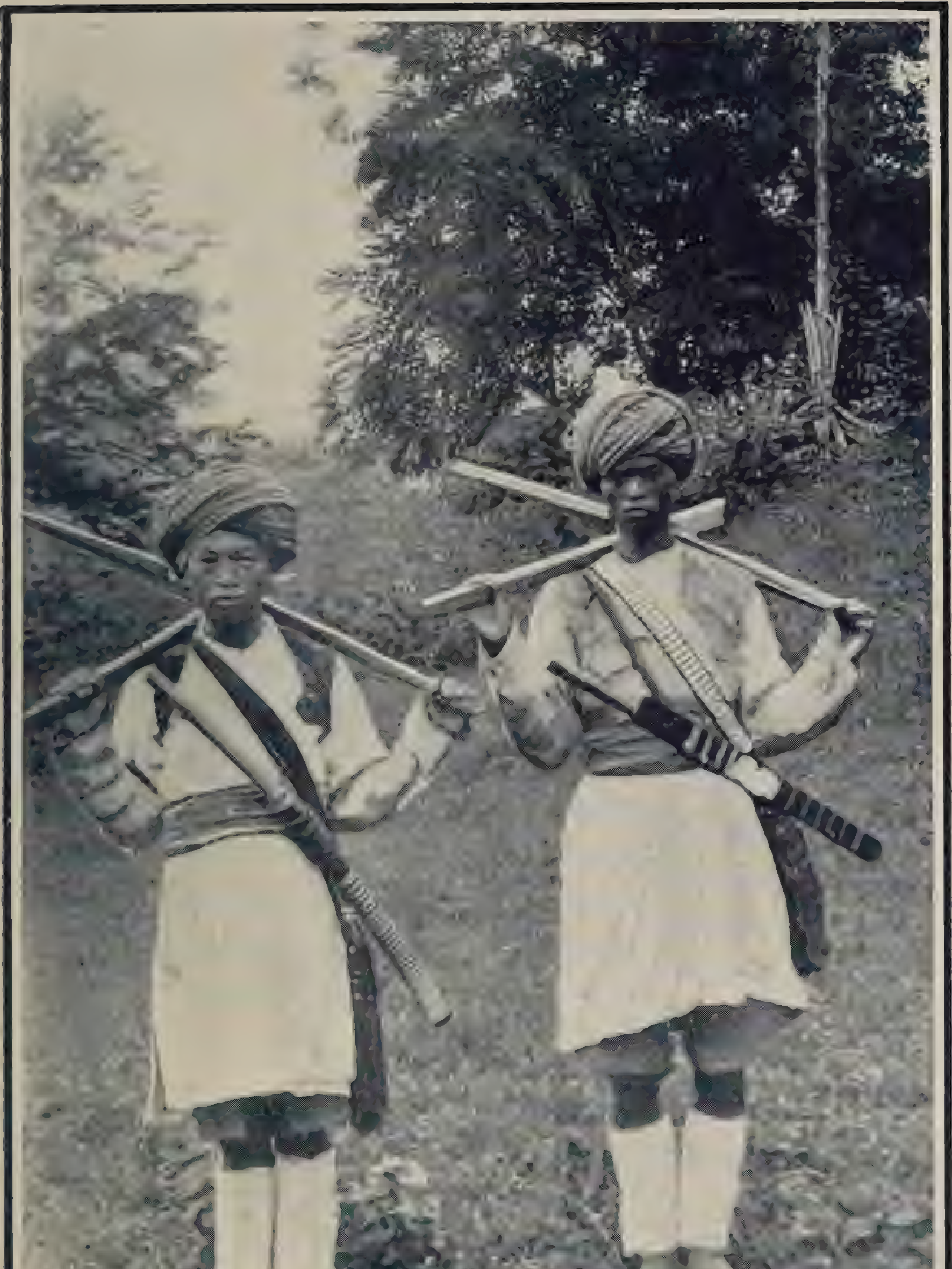
The appearance of the Kachins at this stage was distinctly quaint. They wore sola-topees balanced on the top of their already large turbans. Their clothing badly needed fitting, and each man dripped from a *Chargle*[3] which he slung on his person as if it was an ordinary water-bottle. They appeared to regard the *Atsuya*, or Government, as a mysterious *Nat*[4] which provided unlimited kit and rations, and an entirely insufficient supply of firewood. The function of this *Nat* was to replace the sunshades and sola-topees they scattered behind them over land and sea; and at intervals to distribute strange new toys, such as spine-pads, goggles and housewives. It was not easy at that time to keep pace with the growth of the Kachin language, but it is typical of their adaptability that the Kachins invented new names for everything without borrowing foreign ones.

Their education, especially in the things they were *not* to do, was a ceaseless anxiety, as, for instance: *don't* sit about in the sun; *don't* take off your hat in the tent; *don't* drink the Tigris or swim with sharks; *don't* wash in drinking water or mark your nice new kit with boot-blacking; and above all *don't* spit on parade.

This adventure was to be a landmark in Kachin history, a turning-point in their development. We shall do well to understand these struggles in a distant desert. A brief examination of them will lend significance to our exploration of the Kachin Hills, and to our closer acquaintance with the people in more pleasing and restful surroundings at home.

It is important to note now that the Kachins were less prepared, and in some ways worse provided, than other troops. Their final triumph under circumstances so unfavourable is the best possible proof of their excellence, adaptability and power of endurance. In such conditions no allowances could be made for inexperience. Their military qualities were tested in the hardest possible school. A hill people, they were called upon to serve on the plain. A cold-climate people, they were exposed to intense heat, and for more than a year were crowded in small single-fly tents. They were a forest people who lived those two years in a desert. As it were of a "Bamboo Age," they were called suddenly and without preparation into the intense materialism of a modern war zone.

I suppose that the surroundings into which the Kachins had thus voluntarily and blindly transferred themselves were as different from their natural ones as could possibly be imagined. There are no shady teak and bamboo on an unholy Mesopotamian desert. The *dah* lay idle in its scabbard, with nothing to cut, and the Kachin is always whittling something—*pour passer*



MUHSO.

The Muhso represent the Lolo migration down the Mekong, and are first cousins to the Yawyin.

le temps. Firewood, which they had burned lavishly day and night at home, was scarce as gold, and was indeed said to have been imported all the way from Burma! Presently even that was withdrawn, and the Kachin cooks were faced with new-fangled oil-stoves. The kindly indolence of their native hills was exchanged for the feverish activity and prosaic routine of a modern war zone. All that was picturesque—all the gay bags, loose trousers and jaunty turbans—were reduced to khaki shorts and an abominable Cawnpore topee. The Kachins stood alone, a company by themselves, astonished, not a little pleased, and wonderfully interested. It was encouraging to note that, unlike most Orientals, they were deeply intrigued with all the wonderful things they saw. They yearned to bomb, fly and motor. Their receptive minds absorbed many new ideas. They applied themselves with zeal to all they were taught; and success brought confidence. In spite of the abysmal ignorance out of which they had come, they took their place with other soldiers without difficulty. It is significant that Kachins, who have no writing of their own, should have furnished a regiment composed of Burmese, Sikhs and Gurkhas with half its signallers, and have done all their own clerical work!

The Kachins are so independent in their homes that even the influence of their chiefs, or *Duwas*, is local. It is all the more astonishing, then, to find that in the army they are extraordinarily amenable to discipline.

There was practically no crime, and if Kachins like and trust their leaders they will do anything they are told without question. On the other hand, if treated unjustly, they are quick enough to show resentment in an unmistakable way.

In a short time, as they gained self-confidence, they developed a fine "spirit." The cry they adopted was: "May the Kachins have honour for ever-LAW." ("*Chinghpaw ni a hpung shing-kang, arawng-sadang, dinggrin rai nga u ga-LAW*.") The last word *Law* is an expression of the superlative degree, and was shouted by all. Within a few months they were supplying the Regiment in the field with many of its best drill, bombing, Lewis-gun and P.T. instructors. The Jemadar-Adjutant, Sawan Tang, was a Kachin. They developed in a marked degree the power to instruct, and to assume command even of other races. After eighteen months they had 123 trained Lewis gunners, and 146 trained bombers; and men who but recently imagined that iron ships crawled on the sea-bed were lecturing about *nipots, ta-ni-ni-tas* and *win-wans* (nipples, detonators and wind-vanes). These achievements were largely due to the interest taken in them by the Adjutant, Captain W. W. T. Moore, by Captain C. F. Grant, and by my subaltern, Lieut. B. Ruffell.

The Kachins are quick to learn. Far from being conservative, they are fond of novelty. Any changes in the mode of "sloping" or "fixing" are enthusiastically welcomed as new forms of wisdom. It is pathetic—but very fortunate—that their few text-books are hopelessly out of date. They will do anything, eat anything, and go anywhere, and have no religious prejudice. All these are valuable qualities in an Oriental soldier. They are more clever at technical work than could reasonably be expected of simple hill people who have no literature of their own, and for whom few text-books have been translated. But as a matter of fact I think that the simplicity of their home lives, and the absence of writing, have specially trained their minds to be retentive. I believe that this is why the Kachins learn a profession or a language with apparent ease. Their linguistic power is a constant marvel to those of us who rely so largely upon notebooks. Many Kachins learned Urdu fluently in Mesopotamia, and nearly all spoke it a little.

In their own hills, tribes speaking different languages or dialects often occupy the same or adjacent villages. It naturally follows that Kachins are, from force of circumstances, linguists of considerable ability. It is not rare to find a Kachin who speaks Chinese, Burmese, Maru, Atsi, Lashi, Gauri and Urdu fluently. It is, however, a curious fact that amongst the wildest Yawyin tribes it is an insult to address a man of another clan in his own dialect. A Mitung, for instance, must use his own Mitung speech in addressing a Lasang, unless he wishes to make a quarrel.

The success of the Kachins is not a little surprising when you consider that their homes are buried deep in the jungle-clad hills of the Burmese North-East Frontier. There they have lived for centuries, sheltered by their dense forests from the influence of the outer world. In their natural state they remain still in what I have called a "Bamboo Age," which one would never imagine could produce an intelligence such as lies latent in them. It must not be forgotten that they have not served in the Regular Army for generations. The tradition that grows up out of such service has yet to be cultivated. But they have always been a war-like people, who fought their way into their present hills, and robbed and raided Burma and China until we took them over. When the army tradition is acquired, a few decades hence, the Kachins will be as fine material as any in the service. It will be our duty to encourage and foster a soldierly instinct. The foundations have been well and truly laid. The Kachins have excelled now simply because they have shown willingness, enthusiasm and adaptability. With wider education they will be capable of great things, and possessed as they are with sunny, happy natures, one hopes that education will not spoil them. From the outset they worked side by side with the best classes in the Indian Army—Sikhs, Punjabis and Gurkhas—not merely comparing favourably, but in a few months even rivalling them.

In the first awful exposure tc Mesopotamian heat, and in the following summer, when they were acclimatized and better sheltered, the Kachins proved once and for all their capacity to endure heat and monotony. Their ability in these respects had hitherto been in doubt; nor should it be supposed even now that intense heat suits them. They are essentially a hill people, but they *can* stand heat in an emergency. Only eleven men died of disease in two years out of the four or five hundred who must have passed through the ranks, and only about thirty were invalided. They did not seem to be specially subject to any particular diseases. Several were invalided with tuberculosis. They went through mumps and measles harmlessly like everyone else, though measles is often fatal with Karens. There was no venereal, though the Kachins, not having suffered from it in the past, are now terribly susceptible to this disease, which is spreading all through their hills. Their immunity in this case can only be ascribed to good discipline. Of those who succumbed in Mesopotamia, one man died of heat-stroke, one of consumption, one of Kala Hazar, and the rest of fevers, and of influenza or its attendant pneumonia.

The large majority of Kachins who served in Mesopotamia were Bhamo men, and all came from the ranks of the Burma Military Police.[5] The Myitkyina district supplied very few men, and Lashio and the Kodaung Tracts of Mogok fewer still. Mogaung, the Hukong Valley and the Hkahku, or Upper Irrawaddy Kachins, are as yet untouched for recruiting. Besides the Kachins proper, and their cousins the Gauris, several other tribes were represented in our ranks in Mesopotamia, such as Marus, Lashis, Atsis, Palaungs and Yawyins. They all did well. In fact the Yawyins, who were found to have marked military qualities, were one of the discoveries of the experiment, and I shall have more to say about them later.

With the arrival of fresh drafts the strength of the Kachin company in Mesopotamia rose from 230 to 400. (There was besides a reserve of 125 men in the depot at Mandalay who were at one period employed as a company on the Chin Hills Expedition.) In time, after a weary period of intense training, the regiment was transferred from the line of communications to the field armies. The Kachins played a distinguished part in their first engagement. The incident took place on the 18th June 1919, during operations against Kurds at Sulaimaniyah, beyond Baghdad, and was preceded by eight severe marches of 122 miles from Baiji to Chamchamal, of which the longest march was 21½ miles. The enemy, who had captured our political officers, and destroyed a convoy of armed motors, was found occupying heights which rose precipitously a thousand feet from the plain, and commanded the Bazyan Pass leading into the Sulaimaniyah country. The Kachin and Gurkha companies of the 85th Burma Rifles led the attack, the Kachins taking the heights on one side of the Pass and the Gurkhas those on the other side. The advance having been preceded by a few minutes' bombardment by aeroplanes, two field-guns and a mountain battery, both companies raced for their objectives. The Kurds put up a good resistance, but were severely handled and driven out. Our casualties amounted to two killed and six wounded, of which none occurred amongst the Kachins. The enemy is believed to have lost about fifty killed. The Kachin is not a gentle foe once his blood is up. He is inclined to see red, and his "mopping up" leaves little to be desired. Forty-two of the enemy were actually buried, and a lot of arms, and eighty-five prisoners were captured, including the wounded Sheikh of Sulaimaniyah.

The élan with which this assault was delivered in the dawn is all the more satisfactory when it is considered that the Kachins were exhausted by a series of forced marches. The enemy undoubtedly did not expect their heights to be scaled, and henceforth treated the Chinghpaw with a marked respect, avoiding him in country where troops less active over hills were constantly molested.

The four Kachin platoons on this occasion were commanded respectively by Subadars Chinghpaw Gam and Hpaulu La, Jemadar Kawlu Gam, and Havildar Major N'Hkum Naw—and of these Subadar Hpaulu La, whose men were the first to reach the crest, was mentioned for the excellent way in which he handled his platoon. He received the Indian Distinguished Service Medal. Subadar Chinghpaw Gam was admitted to the Order of British India, with the title of Bahadur. The Kachins in this action fulfilled all the hopes held regarding them. They attacked with dash, and used the *dah* with great effect.[6] The seizure of the heights opened up the road, and enabled cavalry to push through and rescue the political officers. In this action Rifleman Maji Gam (a native of the village of Maji Katawng, Bhamo district) single-handed cleared a *sanga* containing five of the enemy. He was promoted Lance-Naik for his gallantry, and was awarded the Indian Distinguished Service Medal, which was presented to him personally by the Commander-in-Chief in Mesopotamia.

Nothing could have been more fortunate than this engagement. It gave the Kachins assurance. They could now boast of six orders and special medals in the company. Their self-confidence and self-respect were finally established. Their pluck had never been in doubt. Before they ever went to Mesopotamia, Jemadar Mitung Tang (a Yawyin) had won the Order of Merit for tackling a Gurkha who had "run amok." Jemadar Sau Tu, who had won the Order of British India in the Kachin rising of 1914, was further awarded the Médaille Militaire in 1919. This officer was subsequently chosen to go home for the Peace Celebrations, and is probably the first Kachin ever to have visited England.

A pleasing Kachin characteristic is cleanness of mind. They have no topic equivalent to the "*Yauk-chya Mein-ma*" of the Burmese, or to the "*Paisa*" of the Indian, or even to our own "after the wine" talk. They are singularly badly off for swear-words, and have borrowed "damn you" from us with fervent gratitude.

The usual form of oath taken by a Kachin is rather quaint: "If I speak not the truth, may the Tiger seize me, may the Lightning strike me, may Bareng, the *River Nat*, take me when I cross the waters." Truthfulness is quite a Kachin characteristic. This may suffer by contact with the world, especially if advantage is taken of natural straightforwardness. But I have never yet known a Kachin tell a lie, even to evade punishment. Could the same be said of any civilized people? Truthfulness appears inherent in man in his primitive state. The truthfulness of Eskimos, American Indians and forest-dwelling Veddahs of Ceylon has been often commented upon. Good, sound lying is apparently an accomplishment of civilization.

The Kachins have a keen sense of humour, which finds expression in the army in all sorts of dry little jokes, and in the nicknames of "Rat," "Barn Owl," "Spectacles" and "Tucktoo" with which they irreverently dub their officers. My own nickname was always *Shingma-galu*, or "Long Back." Any little thing amuses them. One day the Commanding Officer fell into a deep and very muddy rain puddle. Several horrified Sikhs rushed to pull him out. The Kachins, on the other hand, stood by and howled with laughter. It never struck them at the time as tactless, though the point was subsequently made clear. It is their sunny nature and sense of humour which make such a direct appeal. They are manly and honest, high-spirited and independent, and all these are characteristics which an Englishman naturally appreciates. I heard more genuine laughter in the Kachin lines than in all the rest of Mesopotamia. A joke and a laugh cheer them up wonderfully when they are weary with marching; and by some witty remark an outburst of temper is soon laughed away. They had many strange experiences, these simple hillmen, when they left Burma. They endured discomfort, some sickness, and much heat, monotony and crowding. Yet I cannot recall a single instance of a man seriously losing his temper, or being even querulous. And in the midst of their own trials their natural kindliness often found expression. They developed a brotherly spirit. They learned to carry each other's packs and rifles on the march, and to lead weaker comrades by the hand when they grew faint. The Kachins have already cultivated *esprit de corps*. Of course just at present it is fashionable to advocate *esprit d'arme* instead of *esprit de corps*. The two are, in fact, not interchangeable, but the one is merely the fullest expression of the other. *Esprit d'arme* can only develop out of experience in the field, and out of the personal magnetism of leaders like Lord Roberts, who, whether he praised or damned, was cherished thereafter as an intimate friend. But *esprit de corps* is the base of all loyalty and devotion. It is not necessarily a narrow love, but it is the only love that the rank and file, with their lower intellect, can readily cultivate. With its development, both among officers and men, Burmese units will be as fine as any in the Indian Army.

With tact, kindness and an occasional joke it is possible to get the very best out of these willing fellows. The Kachins are intensely human people. They hate being nagged. They resent abuse so strongly that it is not safe to indulge in it, and where they feel themselves strong enough to do so, they will come out buzzing like bees to punish an insult. With all their cheeriness and surface calm, they have, deep down in their nature, a temper which is extremely formidable when roused, and which is probably their most valuable military asset in a scrap.

Their primitive nature seems to be revealed by the extraordinary dreams they dream, and by the fact that they do not readily resume consciousness when they wake up. It is never safe suddenly to rouse a Kachin from sleep. Even if startled while wide awake, he will instinctively use his feet and his *dah*, and it is quite evident from his eyes that he is not fully conscious. I was twice mobbed in this way while going to see if rifles were properly secured at night, and on one occasion received a most distressing kick on the shin.

This suggests an interesting psychological analysis. The instinct of the primitive man prompts the impulse to strike out in self-defence, whereas, on the other hand, long years of ill-treatment have also taught the Kachins self-restraint, which I have more than once noticed unobserved, when they were receiving provocation in circumstances not favouring retaliation. Danger from raids and kidnapping has developed co-operation in the village, which turns readily into *esprit de corps* in the unit; while jungle experience has encouraged independence, initiative and readiness to assume command. In a mixed crowd it is often the most unassuming Kachin who takes charge in an emergency. As a sentry his swift decision is apt to be disconcerting: "Halt! Who goes there?" ("*Kon Hai? Be thu le?*") Bang! and there is an Arab prowler kicking in the barbed wire. The hunting spirit is strong. They are fond of shooting and fishing. The biggest fish secured by any of us in Mesopotamia was one caught by a Kachin with telegraph wire. It was bigger than himself. It is quite unreasonable to expect a Kachin company that puts up a hare on parade not to break ranks and stream away in pursuit.

The Kachins distinguished themselves on one occasion by boarding the sleeping compartment of a favourite general and waking him up at midnight to say they were glad to see him. I could suggest psychological reasons for this, but not for the attitude of the general, who, it is recorded, *was rather pleased.*

The Kachins certainly made a good impression in Mesopotamia. All the generals under whom they served seemed to take a special interest in them, and the favourable reports sent again and again to Army Headquarters no doubt paved the way for the expansion that followed.

In Mesopotamia my impression was that the faith of the Kachins in their *Nats* had not been shaken. They certainly clung to their religious beliefs. Since their return, however, a change is manifest. Several men have openly rejected their *Nats*, and though few have formally become Christians, many have a tendency that way.

One day a *Nat* bit a Kachin. I went to see the lad in hospital, and he begged for his *dah* to be sent to him. "I just want to wave it about at night, when the *Nats* come close in the dark," he explained. "And, besides, if I die I want it sent home." *Dah*-waving, I felt, might inconvenience the patients in adjacent beds, and at length I persuaded my Kachin that, since we had come to Mesopotamia in a good cause, the *Nats* were really friendly and not at all hostile. So he decided to leave the *dah* in my own personal keeping till he should be well, and I was to send it home if the *Nat*-bite proved fatal. These quaint little incidents were immensely refreshing in the prosaic atmosphere of a war zone. By such episodes one catches a glimpse of men's real natures. They are only children of the hills after all; and if simplicity of heart is worth anything (and it is), then they are happier than we are, who have such a multitude of anxieties and so much wisdom. We have much to learn of endurance, adaptability, patience and kindness from these wild Kachins.

Much of what I have written is at variance with old-established theories and opinions. Those who know the Kachins only in their native hills will perhaps be incredulous. But they are out of touch with these developments, and sometimes I fear out of sympathy with them. The Kachins were not brought into the army without bitter obstruction in many quarters. Knowing what the old prejudices are, I have recorded here just whatever I saw, in a strange, blighted land. We were thrown much together, and there were exceptional opportunities for intimacy and close observation. The men I was able to know so well had travelled. They had experience and discipline, which villagers can never receive. I was able to see, as it were, into the future of this Burmese Arcady, to look ahead into what might be, to judge possibilities that will develop when education rouses the latent qualities of these people. There *are* great possibilities which we can turn to advantage if those who deal with Kachins will only lead them. What I saw of their patience, cheerfulness and high resolve, as well as of their sickness and sorrow, I have recorded here faithfully.

It will be understood, perhaps, how directly these

Kachin lads appeal to one's sympathy, and how their brave resolve, their patience, their unflagging cheeriness, and their simple confidence touch the hearts of all who are responsible for them. They are rich only in their qualities, their simplicity and their friendliness.

In Burma they had many friends during the war. Their interests were watched over there by their civil officers, their military police commandants, their missionaries, and above all by their father, Mr Scott. All these wrote to them, encouraged them, and sent them good wishes and gifts, either privately or through the medium of the Kachin Comforts Fund of Myitkyina. All Upper Burma watched their effort with sympathetic interest, and the Kachin lads knew that.

I remember now with a pang of regret the loyalty and kindness of those Kachins. It was all that warmed for me those weary desert months. There was so little one could do for them, so few ways of requiting their simple devotion. And some lie in desolate graves who will not return in flesh. Nothing could be more pathetic than those short grave-side ceremonies starting the spirit safely on its homeward path, after first placing a coin for journey-money between the dead lips. I wish I could forget those pitiable mounds in Amara and Aligharbi, and yet I think I would not forget even if I could.

So they lived this experience in sunshine and shadow —but mostly in sunshine, thanks to an undefeatable sense of humour. My own humour, I confess, was shaken by recurring shocks.

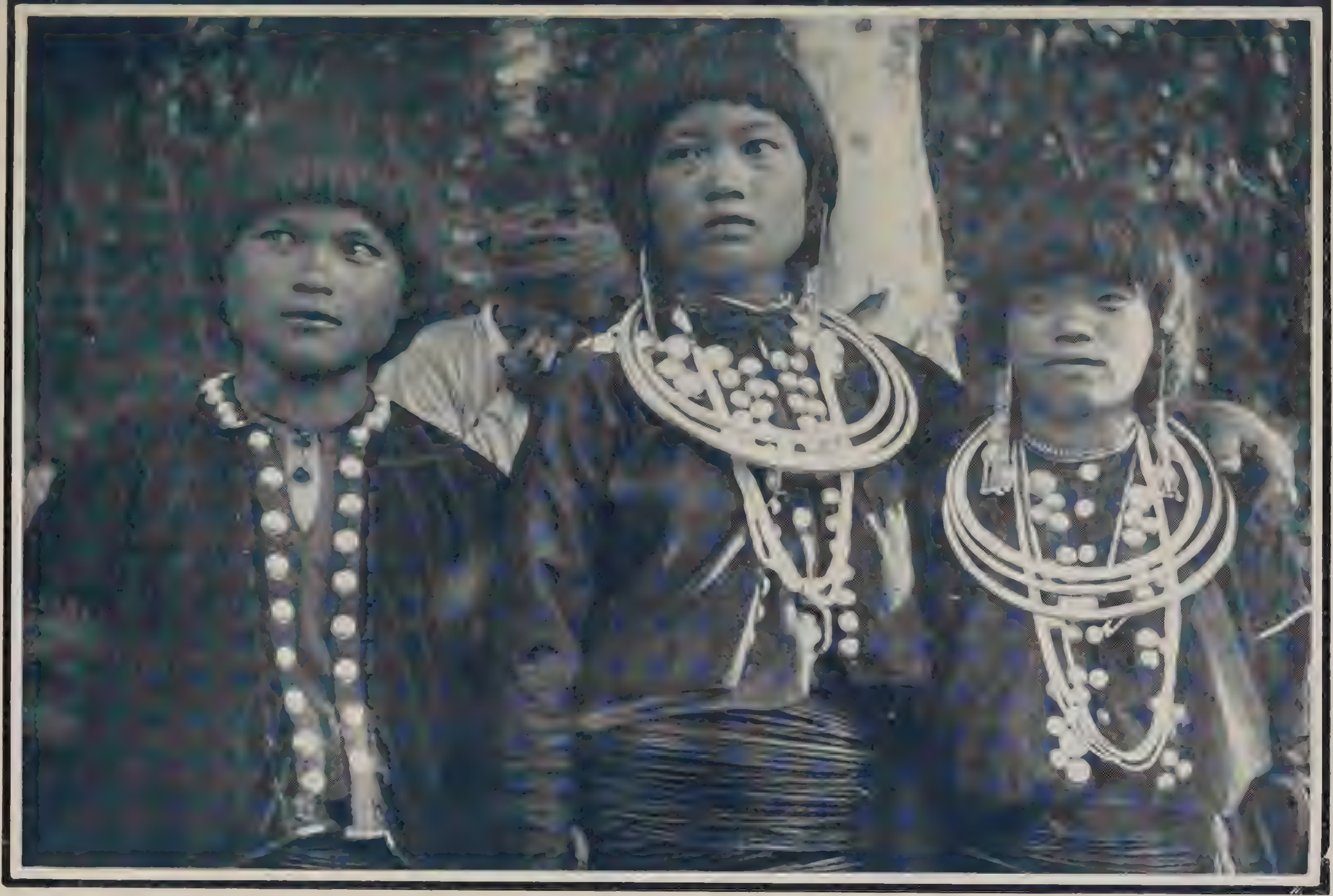
"Now, Măji Gam, what have I told you, ordered you, threatened you? Haven't I read out the capital crimes monthly? Is there not a gallows on the parade ground? *Why* are your shorts marked like headlines in boot-blacking?"

"But, *Duwa*, I only marked the lining; and, besides, I am wearing them inside out."

"Măji Gam," I said, wiping the foam from my lips, "I can see that for myself. Turn them right way out at once, and come to me at the prescribed hour for a mark of my displeasure."

"Oh, but, *Duwa*," says Măji Gam (and I see from his engaging smile that he has me cold), "they are not Government shorts. They are my own."

This venture of the Kachins into the ranks of the Regular Army, and to distant seats of war, was a great venture. It is the greatest forward step they ever took. It is the base of future development, and all those in Burma who have encouraged and fostered it have rendered a greater service to the Kachins and to the Indian Army than can ever be acknowledged. It is important now that all should continue strenuously to encourage a military spirit amongst the indigenous races, and to spread it into areas where it has not yet taken root. This is a work which will bring its own reward and satisfaction to all true lovers of Burma. A thousand prejudices and false theories have vanished.



Bobbed and Belted.

The girl on the left is a Maru. The other two are Kachins. Their bobbed hair shows them to be unmarried. Their hoop-like belts are made of a fine, lacquered bamboo called *Bwi Hka Ri.*

New possibilites have been opened out. Now that man-power is a matter of supreme importance in the world, the discovery of military instincts in new races is of utmost value. More especially is this the case in a country like Burma, where it is now recognized that indigenous troops can, and eventually will, assume an important place in our army.

Self-respect and self-assurance are born of a consciousness of ability. The seed that was sown has already produced good fruit, but the harvest of the future will be better still.

Out of the peaceful Bhamo hills,
Born of their village clay,
With simple hearts, a simple folk
Have gone their loyal way.

Bred 'neath the interlacing shade
Where teak and bamboo grow,
Thence to a treeless Arab plain
Beneath the *Pusht-i-kho.*

Some of them rest in piteous graves,
Lonely—ah! so alone;
Though marble tablets bear their names
Upon the rocks at home.[7]

Theirs was a brave and single mind,
Soil where a seed was sown,
Seed of a great awakening,
And rich the harvest grown.

Theirs was an unfamiliar way.
Blindly they wandered far,
Far from the wooded Bhamo hills:
Chinghpaw arawng Kaba.

NOTES

[1] *Pwe* = a festival.

[2] *Duwa* = a chief.

[3] A canvas water-flask.

[4] *Nat* = a godling.

[5] The red figures on the *Inset Map* show the distribution of 333 Kachins who served in Mesopotamia and whose homes I was able to trace.

[6] Writing of the first Burmese war, Major Snodgrass, Military Secretary to the Expeditionary Force, says: "Their short swords give them [the Burmese] an advantage at close quarters even over the musket and bayonet."—*Burmese War*, p. 95.

[7] A marble tablet bearing the names of those who died in Mesopotamia has been let into the face of a boulder outside the quarter guard at Sinlum (Bhamo).

CHAPTER IV

WALTER SCOTT

THE war ended. The status of the Kachins in the army was still that of military policemen, and it became urgently necessary to convert them into Regulars if they were not to be drawn into the whirlpool of demobilization, and all our labour lost. Their future success as Regular soldiers depended entirely upon retaining our experienced and highly trained Kachin officers, N.C.O.'s and men, both as a nucleus for a new unit, and for recruiting. The men themselves were ready enough. "Give us a Regular battalion of our own," they said, "and we will guarantee the men." And since from every quarter their soldierly qualities had been favourably reported upon, the military authorities (despite a craving for demobilization) were inclined to be sympathetic. The matter had already been laid by Scott, Assistant Superintendent of Sinlum Kăba (Bhamo), before the Kachins at home at a memorable conference, when the same earnest desire for military employment was found to exist amongst the civil population of the hills. Irregular service in the military police no longer satisfied them. They had discovered that the police and the army were two completely different services, a distinction not hitherto understood. They were anxious to learn, and regarded the army as the best means of obtaining education. The tales told by leave men, and the fabulous sums of back pay they squandered, had also not been without effect. Many a soldier took back Rs.400 in small change, and the Arab fight had become an epic in which the slain had risen from tens to hundreds.

Their aspirations were ably represented to Government by Scott, who strongly urged that the Kachins should be permanently employed as Regulars. As a result all the available men were transferred to the army, though their expansion to a whole battalion was still to be deferred for many anxious months.

No news could have pleased Scott more than that which I now wired him. But alas! he never heard it. He was attacked by dysentery resulting from the hardships of recruiting and died suddenly, tragically, in Sinlum, on the 25th April, the very day on which sanction came. His death was a shock to all his many friends. In his dealings with men he showed kindness and tact, which, together with a genial temperament, and a rare simplicity of mind, endeared him to all with whom he came in contact. It is difficult to imagine how a personality of such strength and understanding can ever be replaced in the Kachin Hills, or indeed how the frontier will be administered at all some years hence, when a few outstanding men in the

Provincial Service disappear. Three names, *Lewishon Duwa*, *Rae Duwa* and *Scott Duwa*, are household words in Sinlum. It is only true to say that Walter Scott unselfishly devoted his whole life to the Chinghpaws, who will sincerely grieve his loss for many years. Versed in their ways and wants, firm and kind, accessible and hospitable, Walter Scott was beloved by the Kachins as few men are loved by any frontier race. Without fear himself, he exercised a wonderful ascendancy over them. His word was law, even when law meant retribution. Those who saw him amongst his people can testify to the genuine affection and confidence in which he was held. He was to them a good friend in peace, and a wise mediator in times of trouble. It will be hard to find a *Bum Duwa*[1] with the special abilities of Walter Scott.

It always seems to me a pity to remove for obscure burial in some crowded cemetery the remains of officers who live and die amidst wide spaces on the frontier. A lonely grave amongst the hills is not only an outstanding monument in its solitude, but is usually more in harmony with the life and wishes of the dead. Nevertheless Scott's remains were carried down from Sinlum by the Kachins, who fired a salute of guns as he passed for ever out of their hills. His tombstone in Bhamo has been paid for by the public subscription of the Kachins themselves. His body was laid in the cemetery at Bhamo. *Requiescat in pace.*

It is not easy to appreciate the value of such service as Scott's to the State. The very tranquillity it brings tends to obscure the genius of the man. Of such there is seldom mention in the Honours List. But Scott's greatest work by which he will be remembered is the sympathy with which he encouraged military service amongst the Kachins. It is due to his enthusiasm that the Kachin company was raised which served with such conspicuous success for two years in Mesopotamia. By his energy this unit was maintained all that while. The Sinlum Hills continued to furnish recruits until the entire youth of the district had enlisted.

The Mesopotamia venture was only a step on the way, but it was the first and greatest step ever taken by the Kachins. The very last work to which Scott devoted his attention was this expansion of Kachins as soldiers, which was to ensure them a permanent place in the ranks of our Regular Indian Army, and a battalion of their own. I can hardly express the consternation with which I viewed Kachin recruiting without his active and energetic co-operation.

His regrettable death occurred upon the very day upon which sanction arrived for a scheme, the value of which (and also the difficulty) only he could appreciate. It was a grievous loss. But Scott's work was done, and well done. His memory will live for generations in the new spirit of Kachin soldiers. The regimental pipes bear the Scott tartan in his honour. Nearly all the men from Mesopotamia visited his grave on their return. It is well to recall his own words: "The experience, education and enlightenment that the Kachins have gained by military service overseas will be as valuable to these hills as fifty years of administration." That achievement, that same growing enlightenment of the Kachins—a people with exceptional qualities—is now Scott's own splendid monument. The entry of the Kachins into the Regular Army crowns befittingly a devoted life spent unselfishly in the interests of the Burmese frontier.

NOTE

[1] Hill Chief—*i.e.* Assistant Superintendent.

CHAPTER V

EXPANSION

Tighten your belt, little son:
Grow up and shoulder your gun.[1]

EIGHTY per cent. of the Kachins in the 85th Burma Rifles transferred voluntarily to the Regular Army after the 1st May 1919. This wholesale re-engagement at the end of a war must, I think, be without precedent. Many of the men were anxious to leave, but re-engaged simply to ensure the success of the unit. I myself was appointed Divisional Recruiting Officer, and was joined at once by Sau Nan, who, as Scott's faithful assistant, had gained much experience in recruiting. Heart-broken at Scott's death, Sau Nan now attached himself to me permanently. Our success was largely due to him, and it was extremely gratifying when Government rewarded his services with a silver-mounted *dah*. The Kachin unit was recalled from Mesopotamia in September. Their accumulated pay amounted to Rs.30,000, and with this (all in small change) they were sent off on a spell of well-earned leave to their homes. I suppose such a sum of money has never before been sent into the Kachin country as pay. It was the first and least reward that Bhamo reaped in return for its splendid effort. The market for gongs was utterly demoralized for a time.

Provisional sanction for a Kachin battalion was received in January 1920, but in the meanwhile recruiting had proceeded energetically. The unit was already a *fait accompli*, with Major E. Burd in command. Army reorganization caused weary and anxious delays, but in 1921 a Kachin battalion, known henceforth as the 3/70th Kachin Rifles,[2] was *finally* sanctioned. Their creation, while older Indian regiments were being ruthlessly scrapped, was the highest possible compliment. The reorganized Burma Group now includes one battalion of Burmese and Shans, one of Burmese and Karens, one of Chins and one of Kachins.

The Kachins proceeded overseas again on service almost at once—this time to Malabar, where they took a leading part against the Moplas in October 1921. There was some pretty stiff hand-to-hand fighting. These operations were valuable both as a means of maturing the new recruits, and of bringing their qualities to notice again so soon after their official recognition. They returned to Burma in February 1922, highly pleased with themselves, like terriers who have just destroyed the sofa cushion. The Mopla rebels learned a thing or two about jungle warfare they didn't know before!

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Let us now examine the Kachin areas which contain so much valuable military material. In the extreme north of Burma there are three important districts which are not recruited at all. These are the Hukong Valley,[3] where perhaps one day the future Indo-Burmese Railway will open up a great recruiting field; the Triangle,[4] which is the unadministered country between the N'mai and Mali Hka rivers; and Kamaing.[5] The only northern area where a little—but not nearly enough—recruiting has been done is Myitkyina. Sana and Sinbo (in Myitkyina) are still almost untouched.

The Triangle referred to above is known to the Kachins as the *Sinlawng,* a term applied to any country between two rivers. The Kachins inhabiting it are called *Hkahku,* or "Up-river Kachins." They are probably the finest type of all, but owing to their remoteness and to the fact that their country is unadministered, and therefore unapproachable, they have never been recruited. They come across, however, to work on the Putao-Myitkyina road, and this should afford an opportunity for getting in touch with them. When the Triangle is taken over, as it will be soon, we shall acquire a magnificent recruiting field.

No recruiting at all has been done in Kamaing, partly on account of a misapprehension that the population are mostly slaves. The Kachins of Kamaing are certainly pretty well off, and consequently owned many slaves at one time. Escaped slaves also come in from the adjacent unadministered areas of Hukong, but they are required to reside in colonies at Poi Law, near Kamaing, and at Songka Zup, near Mogaung, and nowhere else. It is incorrect to suppose that Kamaing Kachins are *all* slaves. On the contrary, though slow and heavy in manner, they are remarkably independent. Scott, who served among them for years, considered them a fine type and had a high opinion of their qualities.

Immediately south of Myitkyina is the Bhamo district, of which the Sinlum subdivision is already over-recruited. But in China, across the Sinlum border, there are extensive ranges of Kachin Hills, unfortunately beyond our reach.

The Shwegu subdivision of Bhamo, which lies astride the Irrawaddy, is hardly worth considering. The hills to the north of the Irrawaddy are called *Kyauk-tha-lon*. The Kachins there are a poor lot, and addicted to opium. The country is thinly populated, but adventurous Kachins from the more crowded hills of Bhamo are being encouraged to settle there. They are offered forests in which to cultivate by *taungya,*[6] on condition that they plant in teak, and afterwards weed the ground for a couple of years. Even the original inhabitants of Shwegu are conscious of changed conditions, and are demanding schools.

South of the Irrawaddy, and still in Shwegu, are other Kachin Hills called *Taungde*. A little farther down the river we come to the Katha district, where there are about five thousand Kachins. There is a prejudice against these people, who are supposed to be degenerate. But the standard of comparison is Bhamo, where education and enlightenment have had a long start. The first school in the Katha Kachin Tracts was only opened in 1920.

South of the Katha and Bhamo districts we come to Mogok, where, on both sides of the Shweli river, for a hundred miles from Molo to Namkham, large numbers of Kachins, estimated at from ten to eleven thousand, live in what is called the Kodaung.

Lastly, Kachins are found in the Northern Shan States in an area called Sinli, or Hsenwi. But this is the limit of their southward aggression. They are mixed up with the Shans, under whose influence they have fallen; and beyond Kutkai they are no longer found in appreciable numbers.

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It must be remembered that most of the military police Kachins, and practically all the army Kachins, were drawn from Bhamo. Besides this, Bhamo Kachins are found all over Upper Burma as civil police, private servants, *pyadas* (messengers), elephant drivers and employés of firms. They are impelled thus to travel abroad partly by a taste for adventure, and partly because they are getting crowded in their own country. For this latter reason whole families sometimes migrate to Mogok, Shwegu, and even Lashio. Worldly experience thus achieved is responsible for the urgent desire for education. When the Commissioner visited Bhamo, in January 1921, the Kachins made a petition which contained only one single clause: "We want schools." Surely this is significant! In 1919 it was literally true to say that Kachins were scattered from Bhamo to Baghdad (nay, even to London), and they were all Bhamo men.

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Recruiting is merely a matter of education. Backward areas which are left alone for fear of disturbing them remain backward. It is now noticeable that Kachins elsewhere have not the same spirit as those of Bhamo. But that, after all, is only natural. They have still to develop, and the example of Bhamo should be our best encouragement. The Kachins of one district are not essentially different from those of another. With training, backward areas will develop the same progressive spirit and enthusiasm that Scott and his predecessors fostered in Bhamo. To his honour, and to the honour of the Bhamo Hills, be it said that Bhamo sent all its available youths in support of our Regular company during the Great War. No people have a better record of recruits to population than the Kachins of Bhamo. Bhamo made sacrifice and effort, and to those hills now has come a great reward. For the lads who went overseas have won enlightenment, experience and worldly knowledge which will have a powerful effect upon their people. As Scott said: "The Kachin company when it returns will have an influence in the Bhamo Hills equal to fifty years of administration."

The lads who left Burma almost savages have returned disciplined, with experience of the world and with some skill in the science and mechanism of modern war. The army is now by far the most important civilizing agency. One feels that men who have endured so much, whose service has been entirely voluntary, will be a lasting influence for good, now that they have returned home. All who have had the handling of these generous, devoted Kachins rest entirely confident in the success of their labours, and look forward to the time when more units of Kachins are raised. *Chinghpaw-ni Arawng Kaba-Law.*

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It was obvious from the first that the Bhamo area was over-recruited, and that a serious effort must be made to create new recruiting fields elsewhere. The total population of Sinlum, according to the 1921 Census, is only 48,119, of whom 22,306 are males. The figures to my surprise show an increase of about 5000 on the former Census. With disease so prevalent, I had certainly expected a decrease; and I still think that the apparent rise is due to under-estimation in 1911, when the Kachins feared that enumeration was being made with a view to increasing the taxes. Of the above total perhaps 5000 persons are Shans, etc. In finding other fields the chief difficulty lay in the fact that new areas were entirely unaccustomed to soldiering, and that the recruiters who would dig them out were Bhamo men, and therefore strangers. Shyness, however, must be expected at first. It is natural, and can be overcome. Recruiting, I repeat, is simply a matter of education and experience. At the start it needs persuasion, but later the flow becomes automatic. We have only to look for encouragement to the example of Bhamo, where already leave and furlough men are bringing in their brothers.

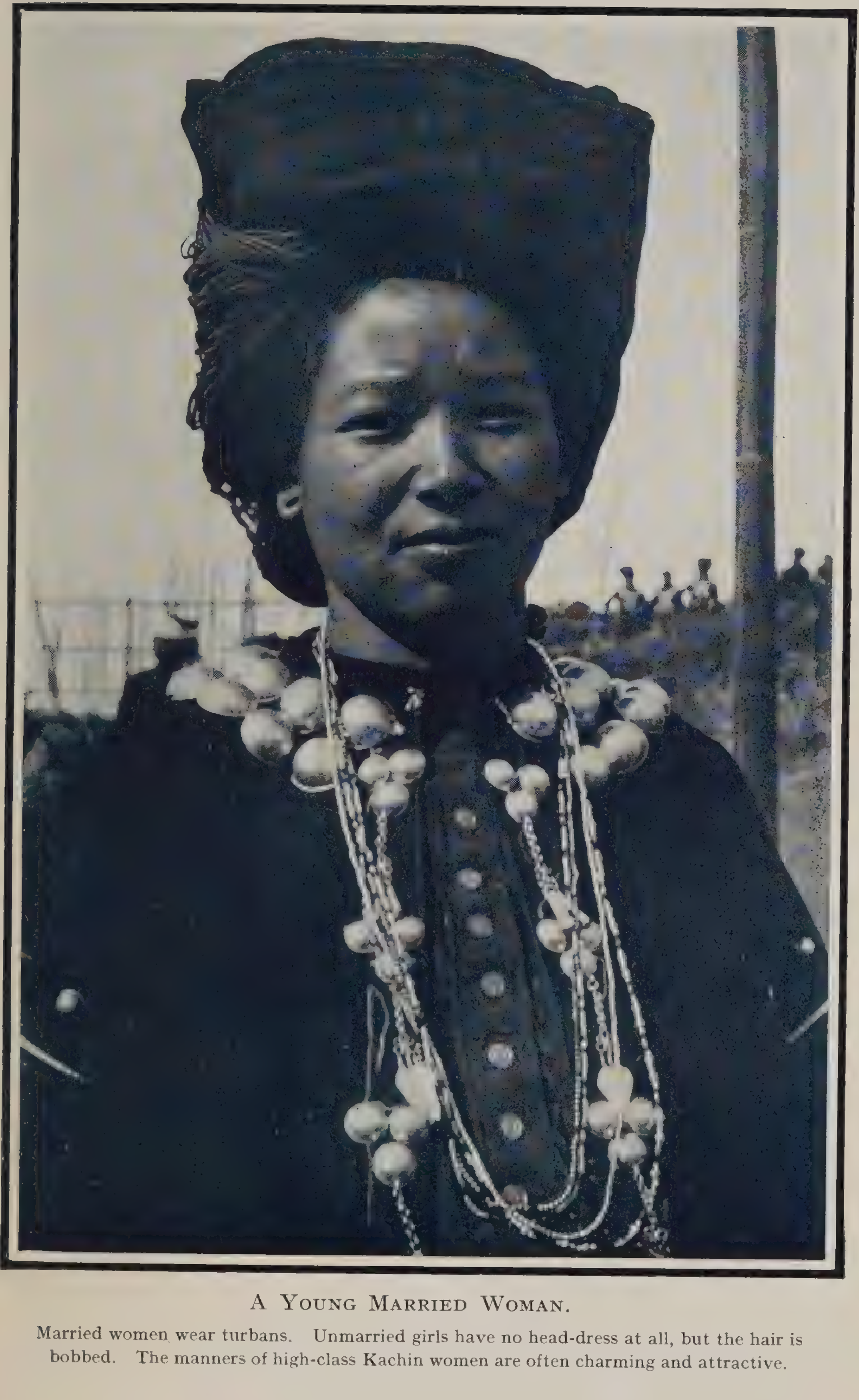
At one time recruiting was regarded with some suspicion. It was prophesied that rebellion would result. But there is no reason to fear resentment, even amongst the wildest races, if recruiting is slow, deliberate and sympathetic. On the contrary, military service is a guarantee for loyalty. The more simple people are, the more miraculous is the hold of discipline upon their imagination, and the more personal the devotion which grows up between officer and man. Later on, Sense of Duty and Sentiment of Service develop—and that is the *Indian Army Tradition*. The Indian Army has cultivated a sense of responsibility and loyalty amongst the most unpromising races, and even amongst our recent enemies. In fact, disturbed areas are the very ones to recruit in *immediately*, because recruiting helps to pacify resentment, and contact tends to restore friendliness and confidence. The history of India is a living example of this. To quote one case out of thousands, I have myself recruited

Mohmands with wounds inflicted by ourselves still raw on them.

Well-conducted recruiting never did, and never will, create disturbances. Bad recruiting certainly may. But a sound military connection is an insurance for good-will.

Burma itself affords several useful comparisons between the behaviour of recruited and unrecruited races. Thus while the Kachins of Kamaing (*unrecruited*) rebelled in 1914-1915, those in Bhamo went to quell the rising, and helped us actively in Mesopotamia. Again, Haka Chins (*unrecruited*) rebelled in 1917-1918, while those of Tidim helped us, and also served in France. And yet again, Shans on the Namhkam border (*unrecruited*) attacked our posts in 1919 and 1922, while the Gauris, quite unsolicited, sent help and a Union Jack to the aid of the Civil Power. One could find many other examples.

In Burma the manliness, gaiety and tolerance of the various peoples make them more than ever amenable to persuasion. There is nothing to be gained by delay. There is no reason to suppose that backward races will be more docile a few years hence than they are now. In the meantime units are establishing Territorial connections, where they will recruit automatically (through leave and furlough men) in the future. Other areas will find it hard to pick up later, and this is a point to bear in mind now. Recruiting naturally follows the line of least resistance. Further,



A YOUNG MARRIED WOMAN.

Married women wear turbans. Unmarried girls have no head-dress at all, but the hair is bobbed. The manners of high-class Kachin women are often charming and attractive.

Time and Tide will not wait. Nations, like individuals, must seize their opportunities. The opening for military employment lost by Burmese, Karens and Kachins in 1885-1887 did not recur until 1917-1919. For others who miss it now it will not come again for perhaps another fifty years.

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The problem is largely one of overcoming the aloofness of the people, and suggesting to them the possibilities of soldiering. In 1895 it was as difficult to recruit in Bhamo as it is elsewhere now. Yet in 1918 Bhamo gave *voluntarily* the whole of its youth in support of seven companies of military police and a large company of Regulars. It has been proved time and again that we only need to gain a footing to open up new fields. The difficulty is, however, aggravated by the remoteness of many areas, and the absence of roads; and this is especially the case amongst the frontier hills. Still, by 1922 we had already extended Kachin recruiting to many new districts in Sadon, Sana, Htawgaw and Lashio. The 3/70th Kachin Rifles possess some of the qualities which the Corps of Guides hold, or used to hold, on the N.W. Indian Frontier. The Kachin Rifles are now so widely recruited, and are so intimate with the languages of the Burmese border, its races and its geography, that they would be at home almost anywhere along its marches.

In backward areas military service, even in the local military police, has never occurred to the people as even possible. It is not surprising, then, that the work of development requires infinite tact and patience. The great thing is to persevere in the face of a seemingly hopeless ignorance, and even in defeat to seek encouragement from what has been achieved elsewhere. For though we can do without the untouched areas now, we shall need them in the future. We cannot afford to neglect such material any longer, for we have in the Kachins, Chins, Lisu, Lashi, Atsi, Muhso, Wa, Kaw, Karen and Taungthu races of the same Mongol or Tartar stock which has proved so valuable in the Gurkha. The fact that they *are* the same sort of folk has been somehow overlooked. In view of their determined aloofness, their development may seem a dream—but see how in thirty years the vision has materialized in Bhamo! And these hill-men are not of a temper to coerce or conscript in a crisis. It is only prudent to cultivate them now gradually, and to win a footing amongst them slowly, while there is yet no urgency or hurry. We cannot hope to effect much in our time, but at least we should lay foundations for the next generation to work upon, as we have worked on the foundations of our predecessors. And besides this, there are all the blessings and benefits of education to which these people of darkened understanding must be brought. A task so apparently disheartening is truly worthy of our courage, hope and patient labour.

There are in Burma many races of the Gurkha type whose development in the military sense would be beneficial to them and to us. The Kachins, Gauris, Lisu and Karens are still insufficiently exploited. The Chins are a numerous race—a brave people, for whom soldiering is the only possible opening. The Muhso, Kaw and Wa of the Shan States are manly folk, as yet untouched. As regards the Muhso, they are Lolos, and their language closely resembles Lisu or Yawyin. The Muhso, in fact, may be said to represent the Lolo immigration down the Mekong, and the Yawyins that down the Salween. If the supply of Yawyins proves insufficient (as seems likely), we can, with a little initiative, console ourselves in the army with their cousins the Muhso.

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On my various tours I learned something of the opposition encountered by recruits from their parents and women-folk. Every Kachin has a *Gumgai*, or grandmother, an inexpressibly dirty old lady of whom he is passionately fond, and whose attitude towards the army is one of uncompromising disapproval. The *Gumgai* is a power not to be ignored. She is by no means the unloved hag one might suppose, and many a Kachin recruit finds it easier to slip away quietly and enlist than to argue it out with his *Gumgai*.

I also learned to appreciate the old people's point of view. The Kachin works ceaselessly for his living. His life is one long struggle with the jungle, from which he yearly wrests his fields, his clothes and his building materials. The loss of strong sons is a serious matter to a family which has to burn and clear fresh jungle each year for cultivation.

The youth of the Bhamo Hills, though certainly over-recruited, is not so much exhausted as it is generally supposed. In some villages lads have gone away wholesale to seek employment of various kinds, but in others they have not ventured out at all. Such villages must be visited in order to distribute recruiting more equally. The discovery of so much suitable material is distinctly encouraging; and besides this it is certain that the class of lad who has sought employment hitherto with trading companies will in future look to the army. This in itself ensures a large field to draw from.

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The rejection of recruits, especially of those who have travelled far, is a delicate question, and closely affects the popularity of recruiting. Rejection is keenly resented by the recruit himself, who blames the officer for drawing him forth with fair words, only to disgrace him by rejection. I have often seen Kachin recruits weep bitterly when turned down. The chief causes of rejection are spleen, skin diseases and venereal. Spleen can usually be treated, unless chronically enlarged and fibrous from oft-repeated infections of malaria. Amongst recruits in Maymyo spleens were successfully reduced after six weeks' treatment with the usual mixture containing sulphates of iron, quinine and magnesia. The prevalence of venereal throughout Burma is perfectly terrible. No one knows better than a recruiting officer its awful ravages. It is a far more serious menace to the present and future generations than are plague and small-pox. But while we vigorously combat these latter, the importance of venereal does not appear to be recognized. In the meanwhile thousands of cases are becoming chronic from neglect.

All over Burma this awful disease is rampant and unchecked. The youth is being ruined, the women infected, the children destroyed and the future generation weakened. And all this in addition to the blindness, madness, pain, sterility and miscarriage which are attendant miseries. No less than forty per cent. of the population is infected! Amongst Kachins the percentage is even higher. Let us pause and consider the horror of it! It is indeed a big problem to bring relief to forty per cent. of a population of twelve millions. But, in God's name, its very magnitude should be the chief incentive. Men and money are needed, and directors who know not the word *impossible*.

In Uganda an interesting experiment has been made in treating venereal. The natives were first brought into the hospitals by the police, till soon the same police had to keep the crowds away! No treatment is more likely to cultivate confidence, since the cure (at any rate of syphilis) is magical. But in Burma the people are amenable to persuasion. The present hospital attendance for these diseases is encouraging; and the literacy of the Burmese facilitates propaganda. If Burmese speak lightly of venereal, and if Kachins attribute it to "*Nat*-bites," it only shows the need for instruction. It is a matter of race preservation. Burma is overrun with foreigners, while at the same time forty per cent. of Burmese children die before they are five years old, and forty per cent. of adults are venereal-stricken. The result must be evident even to a fool if he thinks about it—and the Burmese are not fools. *The only way to stop Venereal now is to cure it.* Our propaganda need not take upon itself the improvement of morals. It need preach only two lessons, but these should be burned into the mind of every man, and every woman too: *This is Race Preservation. Cure yourselves.*

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The average height of the Kachins is probably 5 feet 2 inches. They are short and sturdy, like Gurkhas. The average height of army recruits shown in my Annual Report for 1920 worked out at 5 feet 3·21 inches. The elimination of big lads by medical rejection undoubtedly lowered the standard seriously. Even so, the Kachins came second on the list for height. The Burmese were first. Plenty of Kachins are 5 feet 8 inches, and are big and robust, even as compared with Englishmen. They are a deep-chested people, and in fact have the best chests in Burma. The averages for height and chest shown in the Recruiting Report worked out as follows:—

	Height			Chest	
	Feet	Inches		Max.	Min.
				in.	in.
Burmese	5	3·55	Kachins	34·15	31·75
Kachins	5	3·21	Chins	33·56	31·65
Chins	5	2·77	Karens	33·33	31·71
Karens	5	2·23	Burmese	32·56	30·64

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Already much has occurred to rouse the military sentiment of Burma. Kachins have fought beyond Baghdad. Chins have served in France. Burmese have been to Egypt and Mesopotamia. A Burman (Maung Boon) served with the Australian Forces in Salonica and Suvla Bay. A Karen, the quartermaster of a British transport, after being thrice torpedoed, has been pulled out of the freezing seas of Labrador. These are individual incidents, but taken collectively, and added to many others, they constitute a sum of new experience which must have its effect. What has been done only shows the wisdom of a bold policy. And the value of military education and discipline none can doubt. Certainly its effect upon the Kachins has been remarkable. Those of the Bhamo district are more advanced, enlightened, loyal and travelled than any others, because for more than a decade they have served in the military police. In years to come they will be a hundred per cent. better, simply because a handful of them had the Mesopotamian experience.

The military material existing in Burma is, in some respects, superior to any in the Indian Empire. While possessing the same manly temper as the best Indian soldiers, the races of Burma are free from caste and religious prejudice. They are particularly amenable to the influence of officers they trust, though indeed they will do nothing at all for those they do not. They are essentially a people who must be led, not driven.

With all their faults, the people of Burma—Burmese, Kachins, Karens, Shans and Chins—possess qualities of hardihood and independence, broad-mindedness and cheeriness, which are all too rare amongst Orientals, and are eminently suitable for military purposes. The establishment of these facts in the public mind, and the cultivation of self-assurance and self-respect in these races as soldiers, is the first step towards rebuilding the old martial spirit of Burma.

The military development of the Kachins in such difficult and critical times is largely due to the sympathetic interest taken in their cause by Sir Henry Keary and Sir W. S. Delamain: and on the civil side by Colonel Aplin, Colonel Owens, and Mr Thornton.

Expansion

NOTES

[1] Kachin fathers sing the following verse to their baby sons. A translation appears at the head of the chapter.

Bu jung bu n na n shang ke na wa :
Myi-ha hpai n na kahpa ye na wa.

[2] When the Indian Army is renumbered in 1922 the title of this Battalion will probably be 1/20TH BURMA RIFLES (KACHINS).

[3] Map, Square D. G.

[4] Map, Square D. G.

[5] Map, Square D. H.

[6] *Taungya* is a wasteful system of cultivation used by these hill-folk, who burn valuable forests every year and grow their crops on the land thus cleared. The same clearing is not used again for periods varying from five to thirty years.

CHAPTER VI

BHAMO—THE HEART OF THE HILLS

(*See Map, Square D. H. Also Inset Map, Square B.*)

A FAULTLESS Burmese winter day! The morning fog dissolves into scintillating sunshine by nine o'clock, when mountainous white clouds, together with trees, hills and an occasional pagoda are reflected upon the burnished surface of the Irrawaddy. So the mail steamer *Taping* begins her journey up-river from Mandalay to Bhamo.

All the way there is continual variety in the scenery—now quiet villages with boats and bathers; now dense, silent jungle with tree-trunks standing back in pools of shade. Here a raft of logs pursues its leisurely journey to the sea. There a spit of sand is crowded with white water-birds, each with a bright reflection below it. A couple of Brahmini ducks stand apart by themselves. The *Jabiru*, or black-necked stork, wades in the shallows, or sits on the sand with its red legs spread absurdly before it. This bird is not really black, but glossy blue-green on the head, neck and part of the wing. The rest of the plumage is white. This is our only Burmese stork whose head is entirely covered with feathers. Its length is four and a half feet. The adjutant is also seen sometimes, a great coarse bird over five feet long, and given to eating carrion in the vulgar society of kites, in whose company it may even be seen circling in the air. A darter, or snake bird, having vainly ducked and swum submerged, with only its whip-like neck out of water, climbs on to a bit of drift-wood and stretches out its wings as if in surrender to the *Taping* as she passes. Later on the river narrows. This is the Third, or Lower, Defile. Villages disappear, and we thread our way towards Thabeik-kyin in the calm, still evening through densely wooded hills with no sign of human habitation except an occasional monastery, like that on the little island of Hti-ha-daw. Its once beautiful carvings are falling away. Even the stone steps leading down to the river are in ruin. Yet gold still adheres to the massive teak pillars, suggesting the splendour which once this shrine possessed. A queer hornbill flies across the river, and three otters swimming in mid-stream are turned back by the steamer's approach. Until long after sunset the rich bronze colour of the water is veined with streaks of pale blue.

Next morning we pass the charming village and log depot of Inywa, where the Shweli river joins the Irrawaddy, and on the third day enter the Second, or Middle, Defile,[1] a rippling breeze dispelling the haze which so often envelops it. Here the gorges, which the Kachins call *Ubat Hkumlai*, are extremely beautiful, and in places impressive, especially where great precipices of naked rock tower up 800 feet from the river. The terms *Ubat* (a sort of fish) and *Hkumlai* (a winding passage) seem to be derived from some legendary flood in which it is said the whole mountain was submerged except its summit, which projected from the waters like a fish's head. This defile may be considered the gate of Bhamo and the Kachin Hills beyond. At the base of the cliffs a small pagoda stands on a pinnacle of rock, and is supposed to mark the site where a prince, who was cast over the precipice, was miraculously saved by *Nats*. Its base is 97 feet above low water. A group of five elephants, crowded together on a bluff, trumpet at us as we pass. A forest clearing, cut down the hills for the telegraph wires, is pointed out to American tourists as an "elephant's slide." Many a traveller from U.S.A. cherishes memories and photos of a real, genuine "elephant's slide."

There is a seam of coal or lignite on both sides of the defile, which no doubt runs beneath the river-bed. These gorges of the Irrawaddy are incredibly deep. A R.I.M. steamer once dropped anchor here; 630 feet of chain ran out, and, getting out of control, was lost. Captain Medd has found the bottom at 18 fathoms (108 feet). In that mysterious deep it is believed that great fish have their abode, and even at the surface a well-known river-shark haunts one of the sheltered bays. At low water the wreck of one of King Mindon Min's steamers can still be seen under the bank. Native boats do not enter the defile after heavy rain. The average rise in the Upper Defile, above Bhamo, is 80 feet in the rainy season, and the minimum record is 60 feet. The waters above the first gorges (near Myitkyina) are so piled up that there is a drop of two feet where they enter. The rise at Bhamo itself is about 40 feet. But now in winter the Irrawaddy lies serenely calm, and we pass out of the hills into open country, and so come to Bhamo, where crowds of Kachins and Chinese merchants and muleteers always collect to meet the steamer. The first time I saw that scene was as a globe-trotter, shamelessly taking Bhamo, Canton, Nikko and Niagara in a tour of the world's hotels. I remember wondering at Kachin police and their red turbans in Bhamo, little thinking how soon fate would mix me up with their affairs.

Most of the trade between Burma and China passes through the little river-side town of Bhamo. Bhamo, 1000 miles by river from the sea,[2] is the terminus of the great Burmese water-way, and of the Yünnanese trade route. It is therefore a place of unique importance and interest. For centuries traders and soldiers have used this route for commerce and war between the two countries. The main street is entirely Chinese in appearance, and the fine old Chinese temple contains a beautiful image of Kwanyin, Mother of Mercy.

The present site of Bhamo was probably founded at a period when Shans were predominant in Upper

Burma. The name Bhamo is derived from the Shan words *Man* (village) and *Mau* (a pot)—the "Potter's Village."[3] The Chinese call it *Sin-Kai*, "New Market." Anderson believes that Bhamo is the Kardandan of Marco Polo. In this he is probably wrong, since Kardandan seems to refer to Yünnan generally. But Marco Polo's description of these regions, of the inhabitants, of their customs (including even divination by "*Myihtoi*"), and of the Chinese invasion of Burma (A.D. 1284) following on the battle at Yun-chang (Vochang), is intensely interesting.[4]

The leading authority on Bhamo and its antiquities is Captain Medd, who has been for many, many years agent to the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company. The ghosts of Kublai Khan's generals, the foundations of British and Portuguese factories, fill the country-side for him with a romance which, in his kind, patient way, he imparts to those who have the slightest aptitude. Medd is the guide of tourists in their pathetic ignorance; the mainstay of Chinese traders; the friend of Burmese and Kachins. The charm that Bhamo holds for me is very largely Medd.

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The first stage of the journey into the heart of the Kachin Hills at Sinlum Kaba follows the main trade route from Bhamo to Tengyueh in China. Numbers of Chinese caravans were passing up and down, and those travelling back to China were laden with cotton and ribbon-iron. Silk is one of the chief articles of import.

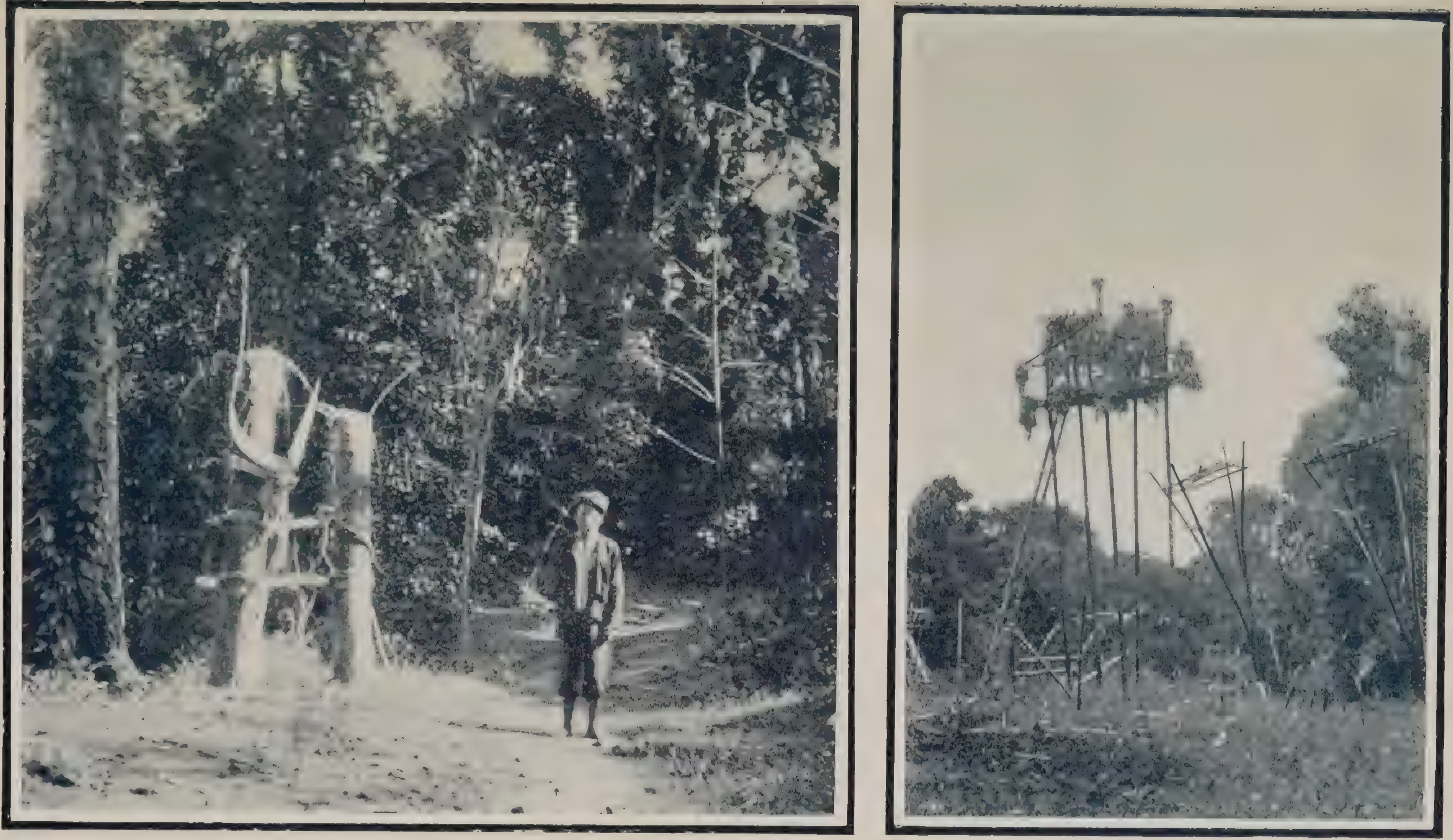
The value of the caravan trade of Bhamo in 1921 reached the remarkable figure of 227½ lakhs, and that was a conservative estimate. Mule transport in this part of Burma is exclusively in Chinese hands. Kachins never own or hire mules. There is a great and increasing demand for mules, and breeding would certainly be profitable if conducted high up in the hills above the *surra* zone.[5]

The cost of transport has gradually risen by four annas and eight annas at a time, until the hire of a mule, which used to be a rupee a day, was on this occasion Rs.4-8-0, and is sometimes even Rs.5. Many mules die of *surra*, and a comparatively insignificant number were at this time (December 1918) employed on the Chin Hills Expedition; but if the cost of transport rises much more it will seriously prejudice frontier trade.

We plunged into dense jungles within a few miles of Bhamo. To one who has wandered interminable months on a Mesopotamian desert it is an inexpressible joy to find oneself buried in the luxuriant foliage of these Burmese forests. The deep pools of shade, the splash of running water, the brilliant sky seen through the branches, the calling of innumerable birds, and occasional glimpses of their gay plumage, are all pleasures so keen, so moving, to one long exiled from them, that I can find no words to express the happiness of it. Here, in all their grandeur, stand armies of *Taung-ding*, *Lahkyik* and *Numraw* trees, which all resemble the teak. Teak itself appears as you approach the hills. Many of the trees are put to special uses. The Kachins make their houses, and nearly all their furniture and utensils, from various kinds of bamboo; and use *U Gat*, the white, edible bamboo (*Gigantochloa Albociliate*), as a vegetable. Of the creeping bamboos, *Masin Ri* supplies string, and *Bwi Hka Ri* the curious girdles which the women wind round their waists. Both grow in dense jungle, and both have thorny skins which are removed by flaying. The fruit of *Mai Hpang Hpun*, a wild fig, is made into a sort of jam. The wood of *Latsai*, the odina-tree (a species of *Pinkadoe*), is used for the coffins of *Duwas*, or chiefs. A lubricating oil is drawn from the sap of *Masa Shinglim Hpun* (Dipterocarpus leaves). A giant creeper, called *Sumgawn ru*, which hangs in festoons from the branches of other trees, has a pod which is used as soap for washing the head.

The seasons are named in Kachin after flowers which happen to bloom at the time. Thus November is called *Maji Ta* after a flowering tree; and March is called *Ut Ta* from the masses of white Bauhinia, whose blossom, like snow-drifts, then fills the forests.

Here, and all the way up the river, I was oppressed by my ignorance about these trees; an ignorance apparently shared by nearly everyone in Burma, not excluding even forest officers. The names given here are the Kachin ones. Most of the trees have no English names at all, and the scientific names are too grotesque to be of any practical value, except perhaps



Numshang.

At the entrance of each village is a "Nat (Godling) Grove," called Numshang—a quiet, slumberous place where little bamboo shrines are dedicated to the Spirits

to trained botanists. There is an enormous amount to learn about these forests, but what is first required is a simple, workable nomenclature, which will convey to the mind some of the qualities of the tree. Some easy classification of this sort, not only of trees, but also of flowers, butterflies, insects and of the less common birds (on the lines of Harington's *Birds of Burma*) will have to be made before the general public can take an intelligent interest in the wonderful and valuable forests of this country. The native names of trees and birds will not do, since, of course, they vary with the language in every part of the country.

The Kachins are close observers of natural history. They are fond of flowers, which they grow in their fields, and with which the girls decorate their heads. They have also a keen appreciation of scenery, and often stop to call attention to it. They say there is a peepul-tree in the moon, and if you stare till the tears come you can see the monkeys moving in it. They have names for a great number of trees, and understand the medicinal properties of many leaves and roots, and the value as food of trees and fungi. There is a curious belief that plants of which the leaves grow out from the stem in pairs are healing. They know the peculiarities of all their birds and animals. About these they weave fanciful legends. I noted several of these stories, but few are concise enough to be worth recording. The art of story-telling in English is brevity, whereas in Kachin the narrative wanders constantly from the tale upon apparently irrelevant subjects. A few examples may, however, be of interest.

Once upon a time, when men were but newly created, no one knew how to dance. At that period only the children of the sun danced, and one day they invited all the birds of the earth to their *mănau* (dance). On their way back the birds saw a peepul-tree of which the figs were ripe. So they alighted there and danced the dances they had just seen, and men watching them learned to dance too.

It is a charming legend, and recalls the memory of many a wayside peepul-tree, whose high dome of foliage is alive with birds when the little figs ripen. Here you may see the *Mynahs* and gay green parrots, and hear the doves call a soft "*Hkru-du, Hkru-du.*" Here *Yauk-hpa Kwe-kaw*, the Burmese cuckoo, cries his Kachin hunting song, "*Hkang-kong, Hkang-gawt.*" And *U-ra*, the green pigeon, who was the "story-teller" at the dance of birds, says "*U u wuk u.*"

The Kachins have many legends about birds, and nearly all refer to this dance. *Mănau Tau-bren*, the fussy little fan-tailed fly-catcher, superintended the preparations, flitting here and there in his excited way. *Mănau Mam-htu*, who husked the rice for the feast, still cries "*Yaw-ik, Yaw-ik,*" just like the Kachin women; and the quail, who pounded the paddy, says "*Yik-yik, Yik-yik.*" *M'Baw-u-ju*, the white-crested laughing-thrush, ground the flour, which is why he is dusty now. *U-gum*, the water-carrier, still grumbles "*Um, Um*"; and the coppersmith beat the meat "*Tok, tok, tok.*" The hornbill (*Hkung-rang*) led the dance of birds, and leaders of Kachin dances still wear hornbills' feathers in their hats. But *Hkung-rang's* cry is not suitable to dance to, and he is, moreover, a bad-tempered chief, with only a small following. So *Sinwa*, the racket-tailed drongo, took his place, and Kachins when they dance still imitate the drongo's whistle.

The Kachins are clever at copying bird sounds and translating them into words. They say the parrots cry "*Kroi-hkring, Kroi-kret, Kroi-hkring*," and the tree pies "*Wa-shan chahkri hkrok hkrak* ("Pickled pork, crack, crack"). The cries of other birds which I never identified are equally clever, and are no doubt well known to all familiar with forest sounds. Thus the bird *U-tawk* says "*Chi-chi-chanai-chya.*" *Kalang-dut* calls a soft "*Tu-du Di-di*"; and *U Tawn*, the peacock, cries "*Ngawk-ngawk-ngawk-nu-waw.*"

Another quaint little legend concerns the partridge. The plain partridge said to the hill patridge: "There are great hills where I live." The hill partridge boasted: "There are many fishes' heads where I come from." So they each went to see the other's country. The partridge now found on the plains sought for hills in vain, and still cries "*Abum kaba ba! Abum kaba ba!*" ("The great hills! The great hills!"). And the partridge now found in the hills, being disillusioned about the food there, calls "*Nga-baw, nga-baw!*" ("Fishes' heads!").

The partridge which says "*Abum kaba ba*" is the Chinese francolin, which is plentiful in scanty jungle where there are only bushes and grass. The bird climbs to a height of four or five feet from the ground when it calls, but takes good cover and is rarely seen. Its five-syllable cry sounds like an appropriate challenge: "I'll defeat you there." The reader with a weakness for philology should look up in a Kachin dictionary the literal meaning of the name of a tree pie, which the Kachins call *Chakye Kaya*.

"Who goes to the hills, goes to his mother." So I thought as I left behind the paddy plains and dear fat Shan babies of Momauk, and started the ascent to Sinlum Kaba. We are now deep into Kachin country. The very roughness of the path is familiar. Nevertheless it is glorified with teak and bamboo, and sanctified by the splendid serenity of the mountains. Schools of red and golden minivets move along their air roads. Fan-tailed warblers flirt in the thicket. The deep hush of the forests, the densely shaded glades, the sunny spurs where visions of the lower world grow more and more extensive, the increasing freshness of the air, and, lastly, the weariness of the climb and a sense of well-earned rest at tea-time—all these promote contentment and peace of mind, and belong to the mother hills. There is ceaseless variety in the ever-growing views, in the countless grouping of trees, and in the alternations of flowers and foliage with the increasing altitude. A deep mental tranquillity belongs to long marches, when the road lies days behind and stretches away days ahead. There is nothing to regret but the inevitable end, with its tyranny of future plans. Free from routine, untrammelled by care, the mind is carried away out of itself by the beauty of forest and river, and abandons itself to the allurement of the hills. Things are viewed calmly, dispassionately, impersonally; and thoughts come which are better and finer than those which belong to the crowded days of life.

The site of the rest-house at Palawng Katawng could be made almost ideal with a little judicious tree-cutting. As it is, the view over the Momauk and Bhamo plains to where the silver Taping river flows out from the hills and joins the Irrawaddy is very fine. As I lingered over tea, the sun set with a new glory into the purple hills, and a school of white-crested laughing-thrushes, unaware of my presence, betrayed themselves hopelessly for the first and only time in my experience, giving me an open view through my glasses of their chestnut wings, and splendid white crests and throats. These furtive but noisy birds are common farther south along the Siamese border. Presently the hills sank into gloom, with only the waters of the Taping and Irrawaddy showing white across the landscape, until at last all the light went out of the sky. Night is truly an infinite tranquillity. To me it is an ecstasy to lie thinking in the silence—or, better still, to enjoy the serene stillness to the point of unconsciousness.

Next day we reached Sinlum, the heart and centre of the Kachin Hills.

Sinlum Kaba is a charming retreat high up on the mountains at a height of 5000 feet. A "circular road," cut round the hills by Mr Rae, commands magnificent views. The most beautiful loop of this road is that leading to Mission Hut, a spur of mountain clothed with splendid trees. The rocks are covered with orchids, and the view over the Taping and Irrawaddy rivers is truly superb. Another wonderful view is that obtained from a cliff which used to be called *Lamu-ga Mada Lung* (Rock of the World View). This rock forms a stupendous precipice, and is now spoken of as *N'ra lung htawn* (Unpleasant Rock). This is really a better name, since equally fine views are seen from Sinlum itself, without the shrinking sensation which this horrible precipice induces.

The name Sinlum is possibly derived from *Masin* (a heart) and *lum* (round); so that Sinlum Bum may therefore mean the "Heart of the Hills."

The object of this, my first journey to Bhamo, was to meet the relatives of my Kachins then still serving in Mesopotamia, to distribute letters, and, if possible, to obtain news for men who, in some cases, had not heard from their homes for two years. Four of my Kachins from Mesopotamia accompanied me, including Jemadar Kumje Naw and my orderly, Changma Tang, all of whom were able to give detailed information to the villagers. Besides this, Scott, then Assistant

Superintendent, placed four *pyadas*, or messengers, at my disposal, who, headed by Sumnut Yaw, were tireless in their zeal for spreading news of my movements through the hills. The Kachins soon appreciated these efforts, and sometimes wives and mothers walked twenty miles over the hills to meet me. Relatives from villages too remote to visit met me on the road, and those who happened to be away from home when I called often followed me up. To all these I gave what news I could, and preached my little gospel:—

"The Kachins have come to great honour. They, your sons, brothers and husbands, are well and happy. The war is won. Have a little more patience till they return to you."

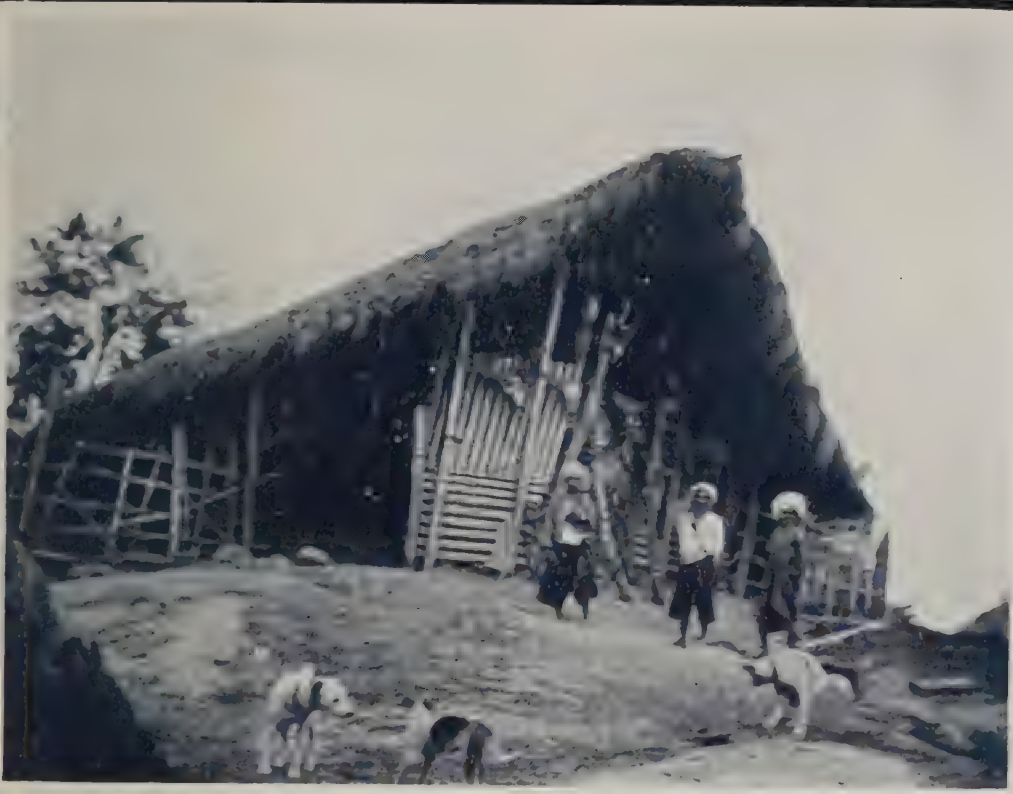
. . . .

Physically the Kachins, like all Mongolians, are short of stature, with high cheek-bones and oblique eyes. The nose is usually insignificant, giving the face a flat appearance. The complexion is dark or olive—though there are exceptions to be noted below. The skull is short, broad and round. In some cases the head is extraordinarily flat behind, but not so much so as is sometimes the case with Karens. The hair is long and black, but there is usually none on the face, except a few whisps of moustache at the corners of the mouth.

Those who enlist in the army belong as a rule to aristocratic classes. Social grades are well marked amongst the Kachins, who in this respect differ from the Burmese. They have hereditary titles like *Du* (Chief), and *Sau* (Lord), which distinguish members of essentially aristocratic families. The better classes have fine features, especially with regard to the nose, lips and chin. The nose, indeed, is sometimes so well developed that certain Kachins might almost be mistaken for Red Indians. This peculiarity has been noted also amongst the Red Karens of Karen-ni. It is significant that Huxley brackets Mongolians and American Red Indians together in his classification of man.[6] Their distinguished manner and *savoir-faire* stamp Kachins of this type at once as well-bred. The colour of their skin is fair, and many of them are really handsome.

On the other hand, the lower, or menial, classes, and many commoners, or *Darat ni*, have coarse features, thick lips, dark skins and loose, heavy jaws. There would therefore appear to be two distinct types—the one tall, fair and fine-featured, and the other short, dark and flat-faced. The isolation in which the Kachins have lived has no doubt tended to keep them true to type, but the custom of marrying habitually into certain families may, by a process of limited selection, be responsible for the creation of the two pronounced types now found.

I was really struck with the beauty and refinement of the wives of many of our men. I had never expected such prettiness, such fine noses and eyes, from Kachin women, whose flat faces are usually as



The Porch.

It is the custom for strangers to make their first entry into a Kachin house by the front door only. To enter by any other door is a breach of etiquette.

A Kachin Home.

The houses are made of thatch and bamboo. Re-thatching is an occasion for much ceremony and festivity. It is common to see houses 300 feet in length.

featureless as a soup-plate. As regards the men in Mesopotamia, their faces most undoubtedly brightened, and seemed to reflect the education and experience they had gained. Such rapid development shows the latent excellence of these simple people. It only requires very little training to make them clever, attractive and companionable. Even their monumental dirtiness can very easily be cured.

It is merely a matter of education. Indeed, so accustomed am I to spick-and-span Kachins, and so favourably was I impressed with what I saw in Sinlum and in many Kachin homes, that I am inclined to believe Kachin dirtiness—and it *is* colossal—might easily be rectified. Dirty houses are responsible for much disease amongst these hill-folk. The Gauris have begun to use plank floors instead of bamboo ones. This is a great improvement. But no sanitation is attempted. Refuse is thrown under the floor to mingle with pigs and fowls. The place is full of vermin. There are few things I dread like the fleas in a Kachin home. *Ce n'est pas la piqure* that I fear so much. *C'est la promenade.*

. . . .

The respect with which Kachins regard the *dah* is one indication of their natural military sentiment. It is reminiscent of the Japanese reverence for the sword. Swords are often painted on posts at the entrance of Kachin villages, and upon the steps leading up into the houses. They are used to stir the wine with which oaths are pledged. Model *dahs* are hung in the porch of a *Duwa's* house, together with symbols representing the sun and moon. Fathers sing a sword song to their children, and no boy or man is without this weapon always in his hand. The *dah* plays an important part in Kachin dances; and when a feud or dispute is settled the parties concerned sometimes bury a *dah.*

Still more significant is a secret art of sword-play, the existence of which was not suspected for some time. Kachins are extremely jealous of this science. Students pay as much as Rs.40 for instruction, lessons being held in deep jungle, with sentries posted to ensure privacy. There appear to be clever parries and swift under-cuts, while cunning retreats and approaches are effected by certain complicated steps. The discovery of this art was made by Captain Green, who so far overcame the prevailing reticence that classes were arranged at Maymyo for the wider instruction of the men of the regiment.

Kachins in the army still carry the *dah* in uniform. In Mesopotamia, though *dahs* were scarce and hard to replace, yet those of deceased men were always sent back to Burma, in order that certain rites might be performed in connection with them at the funeral ceremonies held in the men's homes. The final ceremony of dismissing the spirit does not take place till a year or six months after death. At the time of actual burial a trench is dug round the grave, but a gangway is left which is finally dug out at the dismissal ceremony, provided no cause for feud remains. It is for this final rite that the *dahs* and haversacks of deceased soldiers are sent to their homes. When the last ceremonies are completed, the *dahs* and haversacks, which are the most intimate possessions of all Kachins, are either taken home, or left hanging in the forest. No doubt our own custom of sending the sword, helmet, boots and charger of a soldier with him to his grave originates in a pagan belief that the dead warrior will require his arms hereafter.

The true broad-ended Kachin *dah,* with open bamboo scabbard, is still carried by Hkahku Kachins in Myitkyina. It is, however, seldom seen in Bhamo, or in districts to the south of it, where the pointed Shan *dah* has come into fashion, being more easily procurable.

The Shans have also profoundly influenced the Kachins in matters of dress. The true baggy Kachin trousers, of which the seat is somewhere near the ankles, are only seen now in the northern or Myitkyina areas. The Shan *baumbi*, which is nearly as baggy, but of quite a different cut, is in universal use in Bhamo, while still farther south in the Shan States a silk fillet is worn in place of the turban. The Kachin turban is very jauntily tied, and it is the custom to show a top-knot of hair in the middle of it. The fine white pugarees of the Gauris are especially handsome. The nearer a Kachin approaches the Shans or Burmese in custom or dress, the more degenerate he is. That is a fairly safe rule to judge by.

The dress of the women varies less in different districts than that of the men. It consists of a blue jacket and a short skirt with reddish brown embroidery, while hoops of thin lacquered bamboo are wound round the waist. Married women wear turbans. Unmarried girls have no head-dress at all, but cut the hair in a short, ugly fringe round the face and neck. Kachin women are often loaded with cowries, necklaces and ear ornaments. On festive occasions well-to-do women wear fine black velvet jackets handsomely ornamented with silver discs, and in more civilized parts carry pretty Burmese parasols. They are clever at embroidering cloth and bags, and weave all their own materials. Their manner is free and independent, and they are not at all shy except in remote districts.

. . . .

Sinlum has an elevation of about 5000 feet, and from here the road to the Chinese border at Loije passes through high mountains where new kinds of trees appear, though curiously enough there are no pines. It is probable that the soil in these parts of Burma is unsuitable for pines. They are plentiful farther south in Kalaw and Keng Tung, and farther north at Htawgaw and Hpimaw at 5000 feet. At any rate there seems to be no other explanation for their entire absence in this section of the frontier.

The little Yawyin village of Hka-kan Krung abounds with a graceful tree called *Yawngbau Hpun*. *Bying*, a wild cherry, praised often in Kachin poetry, was now

(December) in full blossom, filling the jungle with splashes of pink. *Layang Hpun* (a species of mountain ash), *Htang-ya Hpun, Ning-ri Hpun,* and *Kinsa Hpun* (a handsome variety of oak) are all common, and grow to a great size. There seem to be two kinds of the *Kinsa,* or *Masawi* — male and female. The male (*Kinsa-la*) is the bigger, has catkins, but no fruit; while the female (*Kinsa-yi*) is smaller, thorny, and has a kind of acorn enclosed in a prickly envelope, like that of a chestnut. A giant creeper of the hills is *Lamun-ru,* whose great woody stems hang in loops from the larger trees. The hill bamboos also differ from those of the plains. The larger ones are *U-ra* (elephant bamboo) and *Mai-chyu,* both valuable to the Kachins for house-building; and the smaller ones are *U-raw* and *Kading* (the common rattan). I have cut as many as twelve walking-sticks from a single length of *Kading.*

We are now nearing the Chinese frontier, and are passing through Yawyin territory.[7] The Yawyins here, as always, occupy the highest hills. The population of this country, like the trees, is regularly stratified according to altitude—Shans in the plains, Kachins in the hills, and Yawyins on the mountain-tops. In spite of their remoteness, I managed to visit a few of these Yawyin villages, notably Hkringmu-dan. The name means "Bracken Land." It was a long climb over hills covered with grass and ferns. The air and brilliant sunshine were intoxicating. The atmosphere literally sparkled, while wonderful blue shadows grew and spread across the hills. What can equal the Burmese frontier in winter? Alas! that winter is gone so soon, and that its dazzling, chill days are so short in these high, narrow valleys. I think this day's lunch of cold chicken and tinned pears was the best ever eaten.

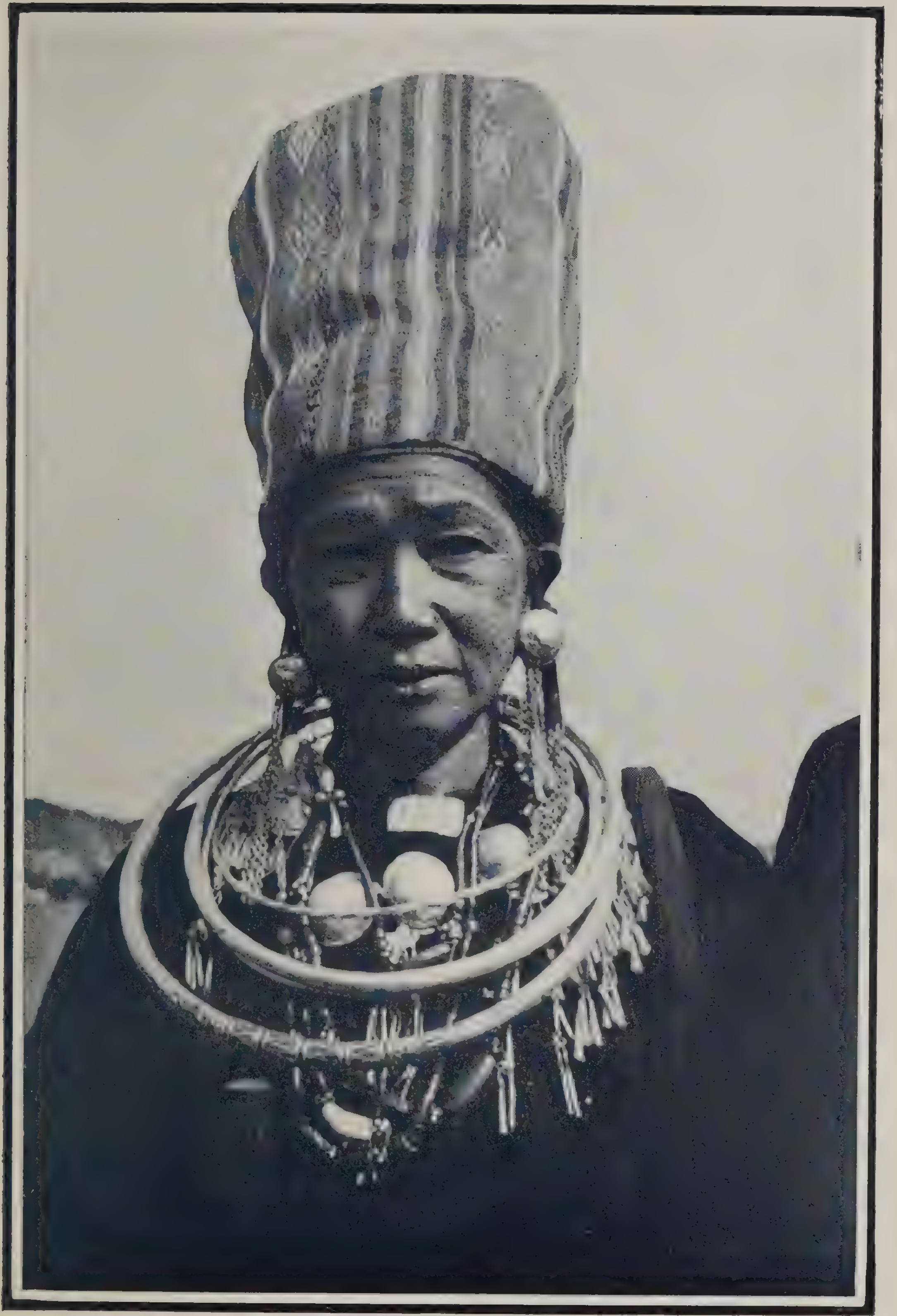
The Yawyins of Hkringmu-dan are Lasangs. They seem to intermarry with the Mitungs, who live across the valley on the opposite mountain-top at Shang Tai. I could not discover that any other Yawyin sub-tribes exist here besides the Mitungs and Lasangs, unless the Lau Shangs are a separate clan. Yawyin women are often pretty, and their costume is gay and attractive.[8]

It was intensely cold at Lapye Kraw, where we slept. In the morning the hills were white with frost, and there was a quarter of an inch of ice in the buckets. I discovered several rare birds here, including the extremely shy blue Burmese whistling-thrush, which haunts running water where the banks are overhung with jungle. It is bigger than an ordinary thrush and is blue all over, except for a yellow beak. The plumbeous water-robin is common in the Kachin Hills, where it is always seen in river-beds. This is a little slate-blue, red-tailed bird which pirouettes on a boulder with his mate. She is less brightly blue, and has a black tail with much white at the base. Forest streams here, both in the plains and in low hills up to 3000 feet, are also the resort of several forktails. Though fairly common, they do not appear to have been reported hitherto from Sinlum. They are very much like wagtails, but rather larger; and the brilliance of their plumage, whether black, white or grey, gives them a special charm. In the case of the lesser black-backed forktail (which occurs also in Shwegu) the upper plumage is jet-black, with a white bar on the wing, a white forehead, and white tail-tips. The throat is black and the rest of the lower plumage white. Gould's spotted forktail is very similar, but the black of the neck is speckled with brilliant white dots. It is common in the hills between Sinlum and Namkham. In the slaty-backed forktail the head and back are grey, with a white line through the eye. The throat is black, the rest of the lower plumage white, while there is a white bar and some black on the wings. These charming little birds build a cup-like nest of mud and rootlets on the face of an earthy bank where it is screened with creepers. Two lusty fledglings occupy it by the first week in May.

In the village of Hpalang I was shown a species of owl which had just been caught, and which I think is rare. The wings were dark brown and light brown, to harmonize with the dusk. The bird was still young, and its body, instead of being covered with feathers, was clothed in a sort of down, rather like moss. It has dark round eyes. Saucers of a whitish colour occupy the whole face, which tapers to a pink beak, of which the upper mandible is savagely hooked. The elongated shape of the face gives the bird an appearance of age and ferocity, not unlike that of an angry old monkey—and indeed the Kachins did not know what it was, and invited me to see "an animal with a beak."

These dense jungles are the retreat of the forest horned owl, and of the owlet *Bukalawi*, with whose cry Kachin women frighten their children. At night is heard the plaintive call of "*Hkam, Hkam*," a night-jar, which in the Gauri Hills is called *Pok-pang*; and of the Indian night-jar (*Carprimulgus Asiaticus*), whose cry sounds like a stone skimming over ice. All day long cuckoos, barbets and orioles fill the forest with their melody. Of these *Puktun* is the familiar European cuckoo. The Kachins have noted that in uttering its cry it moves the tail sideways when rice is maturing, and up and down when the ears are ripe and the grain ready to drop. There is a saying: "*Puktun hkrok hkrak, mam n li chahkrat*" ("When the voice of the cuckoo cracks it is too late to sow paddy").

Beyond Lapye Kraw our way lay up a valley, barren but for bracken and a low scrub of *U raw* bamboo. But the mountain-tops far above were thickly crowned with trees. Presently we climbed to a low gap, and were suddenly confronted with a most wonderful view over China. Below us densely wooded ridges fell to a great plain—the plain of Loije Pa,[9] as extensive and fertile as that of Keng Tung, and encircled by mountains. The paddy had been reaped and stacked



A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN.

But still a dancer. The better class of Kachin women often have refined features. In youth they are comely, and in old age sweet and dignified. Aged women of the poor classes are, however, repulsive.

in "cocks" which, with the help of glasses, were seen to cover the country. Beyond rose a panorama of mountains, the whole presenting a view as grand and spacious as any I had seen since overlooking the Irrawaddy Valley from Sinlum. At our feet lay the village and military police post of Loije Pa, immediately beyond which stands the frontier pillar under a large peepul-tree. This tree is the only one of any size on the whole plain. The distance from Bhamo to the Chinese frontier at Loije is about forty-eight miles. The plain itself is nearly all in China, and, like most plains in these parts, is inhabited chiefly by Shans who have petty *Sawbwas* at Na Seng, Chang Kawng and Lung Chwan Shin. There are, however, Chinese, Shan-Tayoks and a few Palaungs at Loije. This plain, as I afterwards learned, has many moods. At dusk, when shadows creep into it, the smoke of its villages lies across it in streaks. In the early morning it is filled with dissolving wreaths of mist—a sea of sun-lit cloud-billows breaking upon the surrounding mountain spurs, which finally evaporates at about ten o'clock. And it has yet another phase in the rains, when the paddy-fields are wet and glistening, and a shimmering sheet of young rice fills it from wall to wall.

A river, which is called Nam Wan by the Shans, and Lung Shawn Hka by the Kachins, winds placidly through the rice-fields. The foot-hills on both sides of the plain are bare and curiously humped. From other points of view I thought I could trace, at higher levels, the remains of beaches of an old lake, which I imagine must once have occupied what is now the plain. The opposite and distant hills of China are inhabited by Kachins. One or two men even from there served in Mesopotamia. They are mostly Lahtaws, Marips and Atsis, but since they live so far off across the border little is known about them.

The Nam Wan river is a tributary of the Shweli, and from here south to its junction with that river is the boundary between Burma and China. The Loije plain is twenty miles long and five or six miles wide, and has an elevation of only about 3000 feet. The Chinese consider it too low to be healthy for themselves and have therefore left the Shans in possession. Major Davies points out that in China one seldom finds Shans living above 4000 feet, not because they cannot stand the climate, but simply because the Chinese *can*![10] The isolation of Yawyins on the highest mountain-tops is probably due to a like force of circumstances. They are numerically weak, and have therefore not been able to maintain themselves anywhere else but in the most inaccessible hills. Now, however, they glory in their hill-tops, where they do infinite damage to the forests, and cannot be persuaded to move down.

There are numbers of villages on our side of the Loije plain. Of these Sadon is occupied by Atsis, and Yaw Yung Katawng by Chinese. The houses in this Chinese village are built on the ground, and are not raised on posts like those in Kachin villages. Vegetables are cultivated for sale in the market which is held every fifth day in Loije. These vegetable crops have replaced opium, which was grown until lately prohibited. It is said that no opium at all was grown in the Bhamo Hills thirty years ago. It has since been cultivated in Sinlum, in the Gauri country and in Lashio. In Bhamo, at any rate, vigorous measures are being taken for its suppression by destroying the crops.

All the other villages above Loije—*i.e.* Hpalang, Kumje Katawng, Hku-hkawng, Kawng Wai, Ningwe and Vying Hkam—are inhabited by Marans (Kachins). We stopped several days in Kumje Katawng, which is the home of one of my travelling companions, Jemadar Kumje Naw, and under his patronage I now passed. I was introduced to his pretty little wife, Hkaw Htoi, who presented me with a handsome Kachin bag. In receiving such a gift it is customary to accept it with both hands, and never only with one hand. Hpalang village, of which Kumje Katawng forms part, occupies a long ridge, and is said to contain 170 families.

Between the scattered groups of houses are level spaces, splendidly wooded and dedicated to the *Nats*. These village entrances, or *Numshangs*, are quiet, slumberous places, where little bamboo shrines are set up to the *Nats*, and where painted posts and gates are erected to keep off evil influences. The *Nat* shrines, like those sometimes seen in Burmese villages, are often quite empty, except for an offering of a candle or a pot of leaves. In their extreme simplicity they resemble the Shinto altars of Japan. During our stay a house was burned down. On such occasions the evil spirit is expelled by extinguishing all fire throughout the village, and kindling it again by rubbing two bamboos together.

About Kumje village are beautiful panoramas of mountains, including a fine view of Shang Tai. Here, as elsewhere, the wild cherry was in full blossom. On these hills I saw, for the second time in my life, the Great Chinese Barbet.[11]

A Kachin village consists of a cluster of thatched houses with deep gables. The houses are often of great length—sometimes a hundred yards long—and are divided into a series of rooms, each with a fireplace. It is the strict custom for visitors or strangers to enter by the front end, unless there is a corpse in the house, in which case one should enter by the back way. To anyone acquainted with Kachin habits, the recent history of the village is plainly written on its altars. The positions of bamboos, and the way they are cut or notched, indicate births, marriages and deaths—and if deaths, the age and sex of the deceased; and if she was a woman, how many children she had, and how old she was.

During my stay in Kumje Katawng I was positively besieged by relatives of our men. How serious a menace they were may be gathered from the fact that every Kachin soldier has anything up to a dozen mothers and fathers, and positively unlimited brothers and children. This happy state of affairs is arrived at by loosely claiming all aunts and uncles as mothers and fathers, all cousins as brothers, and all nephews and nieces as sons and daughters. The family tie is stronger with them than with ourselves, who regard cousins almost as strangers. The remotest kinships are defined by special names, and the exact nature of many recognized relationships has never yet been properly understood even by officers who have served amongst Kachins for years. In addition to his relatives, a Kachin is always ready to adopt orphans. Lance-Naik Samdu of my party, whose home I visited at Hku-hkawng, had adopted his deceased brother's whole family, including a wife and two children. Like all the inhabitants of Burma, the Kachins are indulgent to children, and the orphan figures conspicuously in their fairy stories. One example will suffice.

There was once an orphan who lived with his grandmother. They were very poor, and the neighbours neglected them shamefully. One day the orphan went to the fields with the rest, and dug up a diamond which dazzled him with its brilliance. He had just presence of mind to sit down on it and pretend to be ill; and at sunset the heartless villagers left the boy out there till his grandmother sought him with a lamp.

"Run, granny," he told her, "and fetch my betel-box."

In this they hid the diamond; but every time they peeped in a flood of light escaped, and all night the villagers kept coming to see if their hut was on fire.

The orphan set out next day to sell his diamond, and a king, hearing of it, sent for him. The orphan would not show the stone till the courtiers had gone to bed, and each time he took it out the people rushed to the palace, thinking it was in flames.

At last a committee was formed to determine the value of the diamond. One minister suggested the payment of a mule and a slave; but his lying lips were twitched on one side, and stuck there. Another suggested a hundred mules of treasure and a noble wife; but his lips were screwed to the back of his neck, leaving him in agony. A third, wiser than the rest, and profiting no doubt by their discomfiture, put the diamond's value at the king's own daughter and half the kingdom, and on these terms the sale was arranged. The orphan (as he always does in these simple stories) returned home triumphant with his bride, and with his grandmother (she, poor old dear, is never forgotten) lived happy ever after. A harmless tale, and typical of many others.

NOTES

[1] Map, Square D. H.

[2] Bhamo is 360 feet above sea-level, and Myitkyina only a little over 400 feet.

[3] Anderson's *Mandalay to Momein*, p. 51.

[4] Marsden's translation, chaps. xli. and xlii.

[5] *A Burmese Loneliness*, p. 186.

[6] *Man's Place in Nature*, chap. iv.

[7] Fytche, *Burma Past and Present*, p. 111.

[8] *A Burmese Enchantment*, p. 174.

[9] The word *Pa*, or *Padzur*, means "a plain" in Yünnanese.

[10] Davies' *Yünnan*, p. 56.

[11] *A Burmese Loneliness*, p. 131.

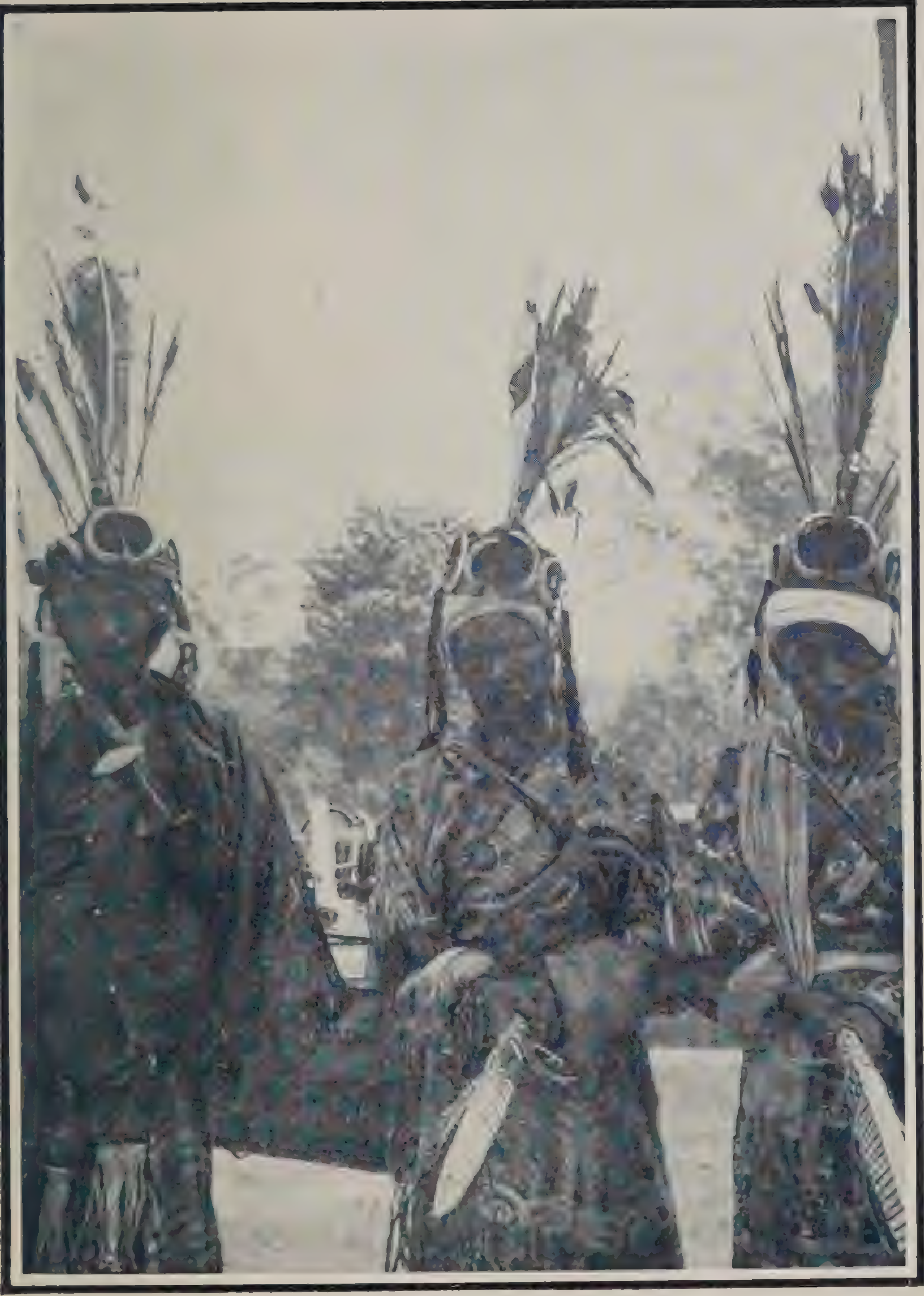
CHAPTER VII

A DANCE & A DECISION

I NOW returned to Sinlum and spent a memorable Christmas with Scott, one I shall always look back to with pleasure. The Armistice was celebrated on Christmas Day by a *Padang Mănau*, or Victory Dance, to attend which at least fifteen hundred Kachins poured into Sinlum. It was agreed to be the biggest dance ever held in the Kachin Hills, and the happy circumstance it was intended to celebrate was an extra inducement for unbounded merriment, if, indeed, Kachins ever require any inducement to be merry.

There are three kinds of religious *mănaus*, or dances: the Prosperity Dance, or *Sut Mănau*; the Burial Dance, or *Ju Mănau*; and the Victory Dance, or *Padang Mănau*. This latter is but rarely held in these degenerate days when, under British rule, war-like operations are not possible.

All through Christmas Eve columns of villagers, dressed in their most splendid attire, filed along the hill roads leading from various districts into Sinlum. Volleys of gun-fire announced their approach, and all Sinlum turned out with guns, gongs and flags to



JAIWAS.

The "Jaiwas" are priests who administer to the *Nats*, or Spirits. They are here shown in full ceremonial robes to officiate at a dance.

receive them. It is the custom for the meeting and arriving processions to break into a stately dance as they greet each other. The woods were filled with the echo of gongs, and the camps which Scott had prepared were filled to overflowing. It was probably the greatest crowd these people themselves had ever seen. And if you will picture all the silver *dahs*, red bags, Chinese state robes, and jaunty hats or turbans of the men; the velvet, silver-studded jackets and silver ornaments of the women, and place the crowd all laughing and talking amongst rocks and trees and beautiful hills culminating in distant Tumbau Bum; and if you will light it all up with pale winter sunshine, and paint above a faultless sky, you will understand how ideal was the setting for this great Kachin *mănau*.

In the evening visitors came up to Scott's house to talk, or to listen to the gramophone; and afterwards the elders were invited to a formal Durbar to discuss military affairs. This was the conference, already referred to, at which the hill people so strongly expressed a desire for army service. The question of demanding regular military employment, as distinct from service in the military police, was thoroughly examined. Their anxiety for regular service was obvious, and indeed they definitely decided to ask for a battalion of their own. As we have already seen, the words spoken in that Durbar were destined to have important results. In all this I gained some insight into the cause of Scott's successful recruiting amongst Kachins, even where others had failed. His was a personal influence upon each individual. He held their hearts and minds, devoting himself and his whole time unselfishly to their welfare. He cultivated that intimate sympathy, friendship and understanding (alas! so rare in these days of office routine) which are the surest defence against rebellion. All were welcome and courteously received in Scott's house, and all were given an egg-cup full of wine. I shall not easily forget the "ceremony of the egg-cup." Here were collected the notables of Sinlum, and the *Dus* and *Salungs* (chiefs and elders) from all the surrounding districts; men from the borders of Myitkyina in the north, to the Shan States in the south; from Bhamo in the west to the Chinese frontier in the east. Here I met the well-known Robin, the *Pyin-ya Ok*[1]; Sara Maran La, Sara La Nau and Sara Ching-nan, the instructors at the Kachin school; and Scott's devoted orderly, Sau Nan, who transferred his allegiance to me immediately after poor Scott's death. Sau Nan is destined to play an important part in these pages. I was also introduced to Hkawn Doi, the charming wife of Chinghpaw Gam, my senior Subadar in Mesopotamia; and to Ma Kai, the pretty sister of Sergeant Lasang Gam, Yawyin. And I met *Sharaw gap wa* (the Tiger-slayer), a toothless but masterful old Lashi—a pretty tough nut in his day no doubt. He has killed eighty tigers, some of them with bow and arrows. Sau Gam, the sublimely tight *Du* of Lahtaw Hpakum, and the father of Sau Nan mentioned above, wrung my hand and addressed confidences to my waistcoat. To all these we spoke of the war, of the Armistice, and of the success of the Kachin experiment in a dark and distant country called the "Western Land" (*Sinna ga*),[2] where there are no trees, and Chinghpaws cook with oil. For many I had letters, and during the following days people from the remotest hills, where there are no post offices, handed me letters for Mesopotamia. The Kachins in these hills, having had so many men at the front, took a keen interest in the war, and were genuinely elated at our success, and proud of their part in it. The Durbar held that Christmas Eve at Sinlum was as thoroughly representative of the Kachin Hills as any meeting could possibly be. It was really curious to watch the anxiety of these hill-men for a regular Kachin regiment of their own. They are jealous of the Burmese. They have noted the mental and physical superiority of men returning from service. With growing pride of race, they are keen upon education, and regard the army as the best school for the enlightenment and development of their youths. Education in their own school at Sinlum (where there are fifty boys and a few girls—all boarders) is only carried up to the fourth standard. There cleanliness is taught as next to godliness, with most gratifying results. All this home influence, added to the enlightenment which 500 well-trained, travelled and disciplined men have brought back with them from across the seas, will have, as I have said, a profound effect upon the Kachins of the Sinlum Hills. With similar education and encouragement the wilder parts of the frontier—and other tribes like Lashis and Marus—will in time develop intelligently, just as the Kachins of Bhamo have done.

The great dance took place at eleven o'clock on Christmas morning (1918), after a seasonable frost which whitened the Sinlum Hills. In gorgeous sunshine the people flocked to the ground, where already the *Mănau Shadung*, or dance posts, had been set up, with the Union Jack floating over them, and where hung the great barrel-shaped drums used only at religious dances. Types from all the Kachin Hills were collected here in a gay, picturesque crowd. They came from Wora Bum, the Gauri country, Loije and Namhkam: men in Chinese robes, lads in all their brave barbaric glory of *dahs*, bags and vast trousers; and women, young and old, loaded with silver ornaments, and with high embroidered turbans on their heads.

Presently the *Shawng Wa*, or leader of the dance, arrived in a Chinese dress blazing with dragons, and assumed his ceremonial hat, crowned with the feathers of the hornbill. Pretty soon the whole crowd was getting into long lines, and picking up the time from the drums and gongs. When all were in step, they ceremoniously entered the enclosure round the dance posts. I shall not attempt to describe what followed during the next three hours. The enclosure was simply packed with dancing men and women, all moving in bewildering confusion, and yet with an orderliness of their own, following the leader of the dance. All the time there was much gun-firing, and sometimes they set up a great shout, or whistled, imitating the call of *Sinwa,* the racket-tailed drongo, whose song is much admired by the Kachins. Some of the steps were symbolic of reaping with *dahs*, and others of winnowing with fans. Each woman is presented with a pretty fan on such occasions. Neither pen nor camera could do justice to such a scene of movement, colour and stately exultation. I can liken it to nothing but a great "Mystery Dance" I once saw at Himis, in Tibet—an impression heightened by the distinctly Tibetan appearance of some of the costumes.

And as I watched these happy, pleasure-loving people I thought of those others in Mesopotamia, then still enduring so patiently the dreary monotony of the desert, proving themselves soldiers and men. There is a great future before the Kachins, if people will but recognize it. They have qualities which only require a little developing to make them into an exceptionally useful and intelligent race, and one which, at least in the military sense, will be of great value to Burma.

NOTES

[1] Inspector of Schools.

[2] Mesopotamia.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GAURIS

(*See Map, Square D.H. Also Inset Map, Square B.*)

IT is difficult to say exactly what the Gauris are, and why they adopt an attitude of aloofness towards other Kachins. That they are true Kachins themselves is proved by their language. Though superficially different, it is only a Kachin dialect, in which the familiar *hp* sound is softened to *f*, and in which the common Kachin verbal termination *ai* becomes *de*. It possesses a vocabulary in which Kachin words like *gumra* (a horse) and *gumhpraw* (money) are corrupted by the Gauris into *gumrang* and *gumfrawng*. The Gauris are probably a subsection of Lahpais, most likely Atsi-Lahpais. Their *Duwas*, or chiefs, are still Lahpais, though they have now ceased to have any standing or influence whatever. It seems that the Gauris are more closely allied to the Chinese than are other Kachins. They have a curious custom of adopting Chinese children when they have no surviving issue of their own. Such adopted children take Gauri names and become Gauris. There are usually four or five of these pure-blooded Chinese in every Gauri village.

The Gauris

The Gauri country is a knot of hills stretching from Sinlum Kaba to the Taping river. This small area is occupied by about fourteen Gauri villages, many of which are so large that they run into one another, or are separated by only a few miles. There are few Gauris elsewhere, except in settlements in the plains or across the Irrawaddy, to which the excess population has been obliged to migrate in recent years. The true Gauri Hills can no longer support their increasing inhabitants, who still employ the wasteful system of cultivation by *taungya*. This crowding has involved the villagers in constant boundary disputes, in the settlement of which poor Scott earned a good deal of resentment before he died. His name is not remembered as kindly here as elsewhere. An amusing story is told of a certain Gauri elder who some years ago spread false reports of Scott's death. To make the punishment fit the crime, he was sent to interview Scott, and told not to return till he had seen him. It took him a month to find him.

The Gauri country was occupied originally by Shans. The Gauris, in fact, claim to have been in possession for only seven generations. The graves of their *Duwas* seem, by their number, to confirm this.

A Kachin grave is usually a conical thatched hut surrounded by a deep trench. Gauri graves, however, are quite different, and are solidly built of stone. In shape they resemble Chinese coffins, being much broader and higher at one end than at the other.

Quite the most remarkable tombs in the country are those of the *Duwas* of Matang, which are built of massive slabs of granite, and are handsomely ornamented and carved in the Chinese style. The façade is like the portico of a house, with imitation doors. These tombs, of which there are three in Matang, were built by the *Duwas* during their own life-time, and are in fact family vaults in which the *Duwas,* their wives, and perhaps their children are buried together. The vault is reached by raising a stone in front, and fresh bodies can thus be passed into the grave when necessary. The tomb of the Wungaw *Duwas* across the Taping at Hkapra is equally massive. Tombs of common people are built on the same plan, but are less solid. Near Sadon one of the usual conical graves (usually built of thatch) is made of stone, and is the only one of its kind known to exist.

The Lahpai *Duwas*, who once ruled the Gauris, have now fallen into complete insignificance. They have less standing even than the village *Salangs,* or elders. While visiting the tombs of this once illustrious family I met the present *Du,* Sau Dwe, cutting wood in the jungle, while his wife carried home the logs. His father, Mung-ga Tang, who is mentioned by Anderson in 1868 on page 320 of his *Mandalay to Momein,* received tribute (*i.e.* blackmail) from both the Burmese and Chinese. Anderson speaks of him as "a most polished and intelligent Kakhyen, with manners and style fully equal to those of any Shan or Burmese gentleman." Mung-ga Tang lived to the age of seventy, and died only fifteen years ago. Though blind for the last ten years of his life, he is remembered as an autocrat, and is still spoken of with respect.

Matang is a charming Gauri village of about sixty houses, situated amidst wooded hills at a height of over 4000 feet. The old "palace" of the Lahpai *Duwas* stands on a hill, and commands a fine view of the surrounding country. This house, which seems to be the one mentioned by Anderson when he visited "Mattin," is built of timber, and stands in the middle of a stone enclosure, or fort. The stout walls and gates are evidently Chinese workmanship. The former splendour of the Lahpai *Duwas* was indicated by the great length of their house, but it has shrunk in size now in proportion to the family fortunes.

Of all the hill people, the Kachins alone have suffered by British occupation. Their conquests and expansion have been arrested, and the good days, when they could enrich themselves by raiding the plains and by harassing passing convoys, are gone. It is certain that the *Duwas* at least have lost their income and their influence. Luckily the Kachins bear us no ill will, and are, in fact, quite the most loyal, friendly and progressive race on the Burmese frontier.

On my first tour, while on leave from Mesopotamia, I visited Matang with my orderly, Changma Tang. This is his home. We drank wine in his house, met his parents, and were shown a splendid gong he had bought for Rs.60 out of his Mesopotamian economies. The Kachins are passionately fond of gongs. Those who returned from Mesopotamia bought a great many. On service I allowed N.C.O.'s only Rs.5, and riflemen Rs.2, a month out of their pay. At first there was a great outcry at this, but they soon appreciated the advantages of economy; and many riflemen eventually took home as much as Rs.400 for the purchase of gongs, cattle and brides. These are all sound forms of investment. The higher ranks, under compulsion, saved sums which, for Kachins, were absolutely fabulous.

Kachins, like the Burmese, are hopeless spendthrifts. They ride in *gharries* while money lasts, and indulge a taste for pens, notebooks and watches, regardless of cost. They are usually badly cheated. I was amused one day in Mesopotamia to see a Kachin rifleman on a salary of Rs.18 outbid a colonel for a chicken, for which he paid Rs.2. It was, in fact, that very incident that impressed upon me the necessity for enforcing economy.

In Matang I was shown a jade or jasper axe-head. The existence of Kachin legends regarding axe-heads seems to imply that such implements are fairly common. They call axe-heads *Mu-ningwa*, or heavenly axes, and believe they fall to earth as meteorites. In fact the Kachin word for a thunderbolt is *Mu-ningwa* also. Stone axe-heads are supposed to possess the power of diverting bullets and lightning, and of preserving houses from fire, and women from death in child-birth. Later I found some jade axe-heads in the museum at Păgan, where the Burmese have similar legends about them.

There is something mysterious about these axe-heads. They are even commoner in the north, and we bought five while touring in Săna (Myitkyina). The people declare they find them on the ground, or dig them up. The axe-heads are, however, highly finished and polished, and the clean edges sometimes appear never to have been used for cutting. There is something suspiciously "manufactured" about them, but I could never find that they are traded to the Kachins on account of their mystic properties. They are certainly not of Kachin origin, and even educated Kachins firmly believe that they fall from heaven. Possibly these implements belonged to the predecessors of the Kachins. The Palaungs, for instance, are workers in stone.

This first tour in the Gauri country developed into a sort of royal progress. Sometimes as many as 200 people met me far out in the hills, and conducted me to their village with gongs and gun-firing. Of all the presents entrusted to me here for men in Mesopotamia, perhaps the most embarrassing was a bit of beef for one. It had been prepared for the funeral ceremonies of his sister. The beef was duly delivered, though in what condition I dread to think; and I confess to having forwarded it by post.

The Gauri Hills are, I think, more beautiful than any other part of the Kachin country. The bold mountains, the fine trees, the white Bauhinia blossom in March, have a very special charm. From each range there are splendid views to the west over the valleys of the Irrawaddy and Taping rivers. To the north rise the uplands of Alaw Bum (5783 feet), in a cleft of which lies the Chinese border. The paths have a pleasant habit of running comparatively level along ridges. In one place there is an imposing waterfall where a river, called the Nam Hpak Hka, leaps over a tremendous cliff into a ravine 800 feet below. Unfortunately, it is difficult to get a really good view of these falls, since the road passes just above them.

The villages are large and charmingly situated. They are scattered along mountain ridges and amidst large trees. Each one claims to be the prettiest all the way from Sinlum through Lamai Bang, Bum Wa and Matang to Chakai. The Gauris themselves are much like other Kachins, a friendly, cheery, independent people, whose only fault is excessive dirtiness. When educated and washed they are most attractive, and it is a real pleasure to note the smart, clean appearance of lads home on leave from the army. Many served in Mesopotamia, where they did well.

There seem to be seven subsections of the Gauris —namely, Lazum, Lazing, Nangzing, Kawlu, Kumbau, Kareng and Changma. They occupy each their own villages, or are distributed at most over half-a-dozen villages.

At Prang Hkudung there is a Roman Catholic mission, administered by Father Gilhodes and Father Juery. These good men have devoted fifteen years to the Gauris, and by patience and kindness have won the very real affection of the villagers. The fathers are always spoken of as *Jau*—a corruption, I suppose, of the Shan word *Sau*. There are 100 boys and 20 girls in their school. I have the most pleasing memories of their hospitality, of their famous white bread, and of their old French wine, with which we flavoured the wild raspberries that ripen in March. Father Gilhodes has done much to encourage recruiting, and won our undying gratitude by receiving and distributing letters during the war. I was pleased to see that, on their return from service, the Gauri soldiers presented Father Gilhodes with a fine gong. Such little acts—the present of a gong to a poor priest; the visit to Scott's grave—speak eloquently of that inborn *savoir-faire* that endears these people to all who work for them.

CHAPTER IX

THE YAWYIN OR LISU

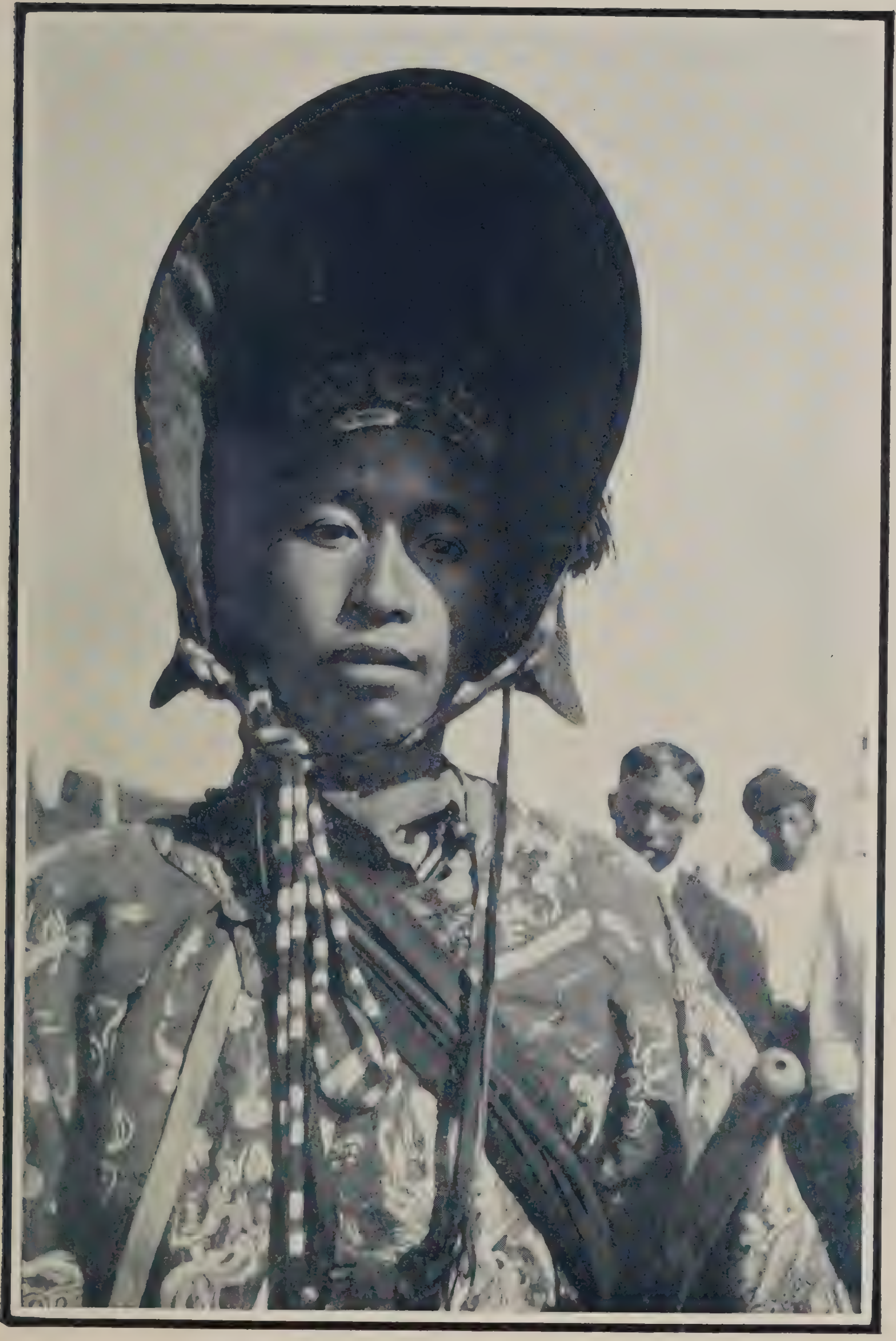
(*See Map, Squares D. H. and E. H.*)

PASSING reference has been made to the Yawyins, a race ethnologically distinct from the Kachins, but who occur on the extreme summits of the Kachin mountains. We have already noticed their villages at Shang Tai, Ta Shan, Hkringmudan and Hka-kan Krung in Bhamo. Farther south we shall meet them again at Bernardmyo. They are found also in Hsenwi, and on the mountain-tops on the left bank of the Shweli in Kodaung, and even as far south as Möng Nai and Möng Pan, in the Southern Shan States, where they occupy the heights of Loimaw and Loi Kyi Lik (Rust Mountain). Loi Kyi Lik is trans-Salween, and the Lisu living there are hardy. As a rule, however, Lisu who have wandered into the Shan States are hopelessly degenerate. In the north there are five Yawyin villages near Sima—namely, Pajau, U-ga Kran, Pa-noi Prang, U-rau Bum and Nang-sa Ku. In Sadon there is a Yawyin community of some importance; and they occur again in the Panwa and Upper Ngaw-chaung valleys near Htawgaw. All these, however, are quite small communities, with the exception of that in Sadon. The majority of the Yawyins live across the border in China; but in British territory they are found again in the Akyang Valley in Patao, where, I am told, their numbers are considerable. Unfortunately Patao is extremely remote. It has been administered only since 1913, and the Yawyins there cannot be reckoned on for recruiting purposes for another generation or two.

The Yawyins have shown marked military qualities. They did well in Mesopotamia, in spite of the fierce heat, and won promotion and distinction out of all proportion to their numbers. Their enlistment might well be extended. By the end of 1920 about seventy were serving. Unfortunately the accessible colonies in British territory are limited, though unexpected immigrations occur now and then, as that into Mogok in 1907. In Mogok there now appear to be about 1350 Yawyins. In Bhamo there are four villages, in Sima five (containing 105 houses), in Sadon about twenty, and in Panwa perhaps five or six. They are, however, nomadic, and, in spite of the permanent appearance of their settlements, are ready to shift if interfered with in the smallest degree. The prohibition to grow opium is likely to result in the disappearance of many Lisu communities.

Physically the Yawyins are a finer race than the Kachins. They and their children are fitter, and the percentage of infant mortality is comparatively low. They are not stricken with goitre and deformities here, though in certain parts of Yünnan they do suffer. Their healthiness is probably due to the great elevation at which they nearly always live. They are rarely found anywhere except on the extreme mountain-tops, where they destroy the jungle round them for miles, leaving the ground bare and open. For this reason they are the despair of Government, though the habit is no doubt a healthy one, and is not without merit in a country smothered with jungle. Yawyin houses are also more sanitary than those of the Kachins. The buildings are always raised on solid plinths, but not on posts, so that spitting through the floor is impossible, and pigs cannot make their wallows under the dwellings as they do in Kachin villages. Farther north, in the Salween and Akyang valleys, the houses *are* raised on posts. The southern Yawyins have been considerably influenced by the Chinese, as is evident from their manners, customs and dress.

The Yawyins have a very peculiar and attractive costume, which varies slightly both for men and women in various localities, as we shall notice when we visit them again later. The men often wear a white coat and gaiters, with blue turban, epaulets, belt and shorts. The general colour scheme is light blue and white. The women wear either a large turban, or a sort of gay head-wrap ornamented with tassels. They dress in a coat, shorts and gaiters, with a long apron plentifully decorated with patterns in green, yellow and red. The whole effect is bizarre, but pleasing. Many of



A DANDY.

The broad Shan "panama hat" is worn also by Kachins, who secure it with a cord below the chin when they ride.

the girls have an upright carriage, and are pretty. Even the old women are neat, homely and comfortable. In parts of Yünnan, and especially amongst the Black Lisu, the dress is practically the same as that of the Chinese, and even the women wear little colour.

The Yawyins are not Chinese, or even of Chinese origin, though their language has been placed wrongly in the Chinese Group, and though they have legends that they are the offspring of a Chinese woman and a certain forest *Nat*, called *Nat Palawng*. They are believed to be a Lolo race, and are probably one of the numerous small indigenous tribes which have been driven into the highlands by the westward expansion of the Chinese. Mr Wilson, Assistant Superintendent of Sadon, is probably right in including their language in the Burmese Group. Many words are certainly similar in Yawyin and Burmese.

The various Lisu dialects vary considerably and are not mutually intelligible. Lisus from Eastern and Western Yünnan have to converse with each other in Chinese. Mr Fraser of the Inland China Mission, to whose generous assistance I am much indebted, informs me that in the several dialects he finds about 60 per cent. of the words constant, and 40 per cent. different. The language is difficult. There are 6 tones, and 250 separate sounds, none of which have consonantal endings. Hence the Lisu pronounce Chinese badly. They have, however, borrowed and corrupted a large number of Chinese words.

Many Lisu claim to be of Chinese origin. They say that their ancestors came from Hunan and Kiangsi centuries ago, and *turned Lisu.* "This," Mr Fraser tells me, "is quite probable. We see the same process taking place still. I know several pure Chinese who have married Lisu women and are living amongst the Lisu. Their future generations will be Lisu, not Chinese. They are in the first stage of *turning Lisu.*" The Lisu never marry Chinese wives. The reader will recall a similar process of transformation amongst the Gauris, whose adopted Chinese children grow up as pure Gauris.[1] These facts are the more extraordinary when we remember the power possessed by the Chinese of absorbing their neighbours. The children of mixed Chino-Burmese marriages in Burma are *always* Chinamen.[2]

In the east of Yünnan, where Chinese influence is stronger, the opposite is the case. "There," says Mr Fraser, "it is usual for the Lolo and other aborigines by a gradual process to *turn Chinese.* I have met aborigines near Yünnan-fu who are ashamed to own that they are not Chinese." Along the Burmese border no Lisu or Kachin is ever ashamed of his nationality.

It is difficult to arrive at any definite conclusion with regard to the origin, history or migrations of the race. The Yawyins speak of themselves as *Lisu*, which in their language means "have come down," or "the people who have come down." Mr Fraser tells me they are unanimous in believing that they have "come down," but their knowledge of geography is too vague to determine from whence. Many say from the Upper Salween; some mention Hsiang Hsiang (near Hpimaw); and others speak obscurely of the Wa Ba district in Upper Mekong. It seems more than probable that they came down from Eastern Tibet, spreading out thence fan-wise into Putao, down the N'mai Hka, Salween and Mekong, and towards the Yangtzi in the direction of Yünnan-fu. The greater part of the race is now located in China (Yünnan), west of Yünnan-fu. Those now found in Myitkyina, Bhamo, the Shan States and Tengyueh may be a somewhat later migration. The general tendency to migrate southwards is still distinctly noticeable, and strikingly confirms their uniform tradition that they have come from the north. They live for a generation or so in some high, cold and barren spot until they have cut down all the jungle available for *taungya*, and then begin to cast about for new forests to devastate. Those who move into warm climates are noticeably inferior to those who live on the mountain-tops.

The Chinese call these people *Lisaw*, except in the east and central parts of Yünnan, where they give them their proper title of *Lisu*. Just there, perversely enough, the Lisu call themselves *Lihpaw*. The Maru and Lashi call them respectively *Lasi*, and *Leur-seur*. The Chinese, as mentioned elsewhere, call the Kachin races generally *Ye-Jen* or *Ye-Ren* (savages), and the

Kachins have passed the same name on to the Lisu, changing it slightly into *Yawyin.* The Chinese never speak of the Lisu as *Ye-Ren.*

The Chinese make such distinctions as *Pe Lisu* (White Yawyins) and *He Lisu* (Black Yawyins), and speak of certain tribes as *Hwa Lisu* (Flowery Yawyins), from the prettiness of the women's dress.

The study of the Lisu is a subject of very special difficulty owing to the inaccessibility of their country. The Sino-Burmese frontier is the extreme western limit of their distribution. Their main settlements are in Yünnan, where they occupy the Salween Valley from latitude 27°40′ to about latitude 25°—that is to say, roughly, from a point opposite Putao to a point opposite Myitkyina. Of these, the northern ones are Black Lisu. Here, in their secluded home, protected by steep, snow-clad mountains, they are completely independent. In the same latitudes they occur also in the Mekong and Yangtze valleys. In Yünnan it is only the southern settlements which have come under Chinese influence, and even in British territory, though friendly and peaceable, they brook little interference.

The main subdivisions of the Yawyin race appear to be called *Tawn Kya, Ngwa Hpa, Ngaw Hpa, Zaw Kya, Gu Hpa, Lair-mair, Bya Hpa, Dzi Hpa, La Hpa, Waw Hpa* (level tone), and *Waw Hpa* (descending tone). The words *Lair-mair* are pronounced exactly like *lat-mat,* without the two t's.

The relation of the clans towards each other appears to be the same as in the case of the Kachins. The word *Kya* means family. In correcting my notes, Mr Fraser insisted strongly that the divisions are not tribal. The names, he says, are merely clan or family names, like Mackenzie or Gordon, and nothing more. "For a long time I did not even regard them as clan, but just family surnames like our own or the Chinese, and that is all they amount to in districts where they are scattered. Of course the difference between family surnames and clan names is only a matter of degree, but a *clan* is rather distinct from a *tribe*."

All the clans, however, do not occur in British territory. Those which do are known to the Kachins by Kachin names, though there seems to be some inconsistency in the identification. Thus lists obtained from Kachins and Yawyins at Pajau (Sima) do not agree exactly with lists obtained in Sadon.

Since we always communicate with Yawyins in the Kachin language, the clans are usually known to us by their Kachin names. Thus the *Tawn Kya* are spoken of as Mitung in Kachin; the *Ngwa Hpa* and *Ngaw Hpa* as Marip; the *Zaw Kya* as Lahtaw; and the *Gu Hpa* and *Waw Hpa* (descending tone) as Lahpai. In Myitkyina the *Lair-mair* are known to the Kachins as N'Hkum, but in Bhamo as Lasang; and at Pajau the *Zaw Kya* were identified most positively as Labya. Besides their own individual names, the Yawyins appear to have post-mortem names which are given to them at birth and then not used again till death.

They nearly always assume Kachin names in the army.

The Yawyin families appear to have been named after individual peculiarities, or after animals. Thus *Ngwa Hpa* means fish people; *Ngaw Hpa*, joined people; *Zaw Kya*, ginger people; *Gu Hpa*, owl or night-bird people; *Bya Hpa*, bee people; *Dzi Hpa*, hemp people; *Lair-mair*, tasteless people; *La Hpa*, tiger people; *Hair Hpa*, mouse people; *Waw Hpa* (level tone), bear people; and *Waw Hpa* (descending tone), mustard people.

The Yawyins are far more moral than the Kachins. There is no such thing as an *n la dap* in their houses. They are *Nat* worshippers, their *Nat* ancestors especially being regarded with fear and respect. Like the Kachins, they appear to look to some ancestral home as their post-mortem abode, and as with Kachins, the spirit is provided with money, and assisted with sacrifices on its long journey over certain well-defined mountains and rivers. It must, however, be remembered that little is known of these obscure people, and that nothing can yet be accepted with certainty.

There are 50 or 60 families of Lisu Christians in Myitkyina, 400 in Tengyueh, several hundred more in Szemao, and about 1000 families near Yuanmow. Mr Fraser has devised a simple script for the Lisu language, using Roman capitals (some inverted), and indicating tones by means of punctuation. In this way the gospels of St Mark and St Luke have been printed.[3]

The Yawyin or Lisu

Mr Fraser has worked amongst the Lisu in Tengyueh for twelve years, and is probably the best authority on them. I am greatly indebted to him not only for supplying information, but also for patiently correcting this chapter.

The Lolo Group, as found in Burma, includes Lolo (of whom only 339 were counted in 1911), Lahu (including Muhso, who are Black Lahus), Kwi, Kaw, Ako and Lisu (Yawyin).

NOTES

[1] See p. 126.

[2] *A Burmese Enchantment*, p. 21.

[3] Mr J. St H. Cleburne is preparing a Lisu Grammar. I am indebted to him for much sympathetic help, and also for some of the illustrations produced here.

CHAPTER X

SHWEGU—A STORM & AN ELOPEMENT

(*See Map, Square D. H.*)

BEFORE finally leaving the Bhamo district we must glance briefly at Shwegu. Here conditions are the exact reverse of those existing in the crowded Gauri Hills. The population of Shwegu is thin, and the people are poor. Money earned by the young men is recklessly squandered away from home. In the villages there are no signs of wealth. When I visited the area in May 1920 the stocks of rice were low. Many families had brewed no wine at all. The disastrous results of influenza were everywhere visible in the backward state of the cultivation, and in the deplorable condition of the houses, which, for lack of labour, had not been repaired. In some cases whole families were completely wiped out. Throughout my tour I did not see a village with more than six or eight houses, and even such little settlements are often ten miles apart.

The area, however, is attractive. The plains are covered with magnificent forests, and the breezy heights of Tangde Bum are delightful in the hot season. This little bit of country is easily reached from the Irrawaddy at Sinkan, whence a jungle track leads for several days' journey through Kachin country until it emerges in more open country round the Shan-Burmese villages of Malang and Sikaw. Sikaw is a local market of some importance and is connected with Bhamo by an unmetalled cart road. The Kachin name for Sikaw is Chye-gau. From this point Kodaung can be reached in two or three days. The country round is charming. The River Nam Hkik Hka runs through it, and there are wide expanses of turf and paddy-land. The magnificent trees in the surrounding jungles are covered with orchids, and every forest stream is choked with teak logs which are floated out into the Irrawaddy during the rainy season.

The true rains are often preceded by storms of considerable grandeur. Such a one burst over Sikaw when I was halted there on the 8th May (1920). Thunder rumbled along the horizon, where a thick haze gathered and spread until the sky was overcast. The forest stood motionless and expectant, while the rush of distant wind was heard like the sound of an approaching train. Suddenly the storm reached us with sheets of rain. Squall upon squall smote the trees till they flung up their arms in agony. The racket of wind, rain and hail was no doubt augmented by the falling of hundreds of tons of timber. Presently the storm passed. Pale sunshine struggled through the ragged clouds. While gigantic trees had succumbed, the frail fairy blue chat reappeared as if nothing had happened. Yellow-necked green pigeon resumed their feast of figs on the peepul-trees. Frogs, thoroughly pleased with the rain, croaked contentedly, and the good smell of Mother Earth refreshed stole out of the jungle.

The full extent of the damage caused by such a storm was only appreciated when we resumed our march. Throughout the rest of the journey we found the paths blocked with fallen branches, creepers and bamboos. Where possible we sent villagers ahead to open the way, but often we had to clear it ourselves with considerable difficulty. Great limbs strewed the ground, and mighty trees lay uprooted or snapped in two. Every yard of jungle spoke mutely of violent treatment, and it was frequently necessary to cut a path round impenetrable debris, and to brave the raging red ants which strongly resented our excursions from the main path. In hilly places, where the baggage mules could not easily leave the track, fallen trees were still more embarrassing. The ill-repaired houses suffered greatly in this storm, and one or two were blown to bits in almost every village.

We were now heading for the Tangde Hills. At Nyaung Gon, a charming Kachin village at the foot of the mountains, I discovered a kingfisher hitherto, I believe, unknown to science. I christened this gorgeous bird Enriquez Burmese plum-headed kingfisher. The curator of the South Kensington Natural History Museum suggested that it might be *Ceyx Tridactyla*, but I am sure it was not. The head, neck and back are rich plum colour, with a streak of yellow behind the eye. The wings are blue, and the whole throat, breast and belly bright yellow. The bill is orange and the feet red. It is discoveries like this which lend zest to ornithological research. The subject is inexhaustible, and offers all the time new problems, new speculations and charming new discoveries. Shwegu is rich in birds. Many I was unable to identify Many allowed me a view only sufficient to demonstrate my ignorance. Forest wagtails and several species of forktails abound; and golden orioles are more numerous here, I think, than elsewhere. The deep forests are the resort of the red-headed trogon, a gaudy chestnut bird with scarlet head and breast.

The Kachins tell a quaint legend regarding three birds which have crimson plumage. The story is connected with the legend of the bird dance which I have already described, and about which all other Kachin bird legends are centred. At the dance of birds it was the duty of *U Tu* (a green barbet with a scarlet cap) to issue rations. He gave the tiny *Htingra Kai-sek* (the fire-breasted flower-pecker) a small portion suitable to his size. The flower-pecker in his rage cut the barbet over the head, and got some of the blood on his own breast. Later on *Sumwi Byit* (the minivet) carried the barbet away, and, blood flowing all over him, his whole plumage is crimson to this day.

Tangde Bum is 4127 feet. It is the highest point in the range through which, farther north, the Irrawaddy forces its way through the Second Defile. Our camp at Tangde village commanded a wide view, and the breezes were so cool and refreshing that we halted there an extra day. It happened that *yi wa*, or field huts, were being built, which is an occasion for a picnic on the hills. The villagers were delighted by the help given them by my recruiters which enabled them to finish the job in a day. In crowded areas the Kachins are obliged to recultivate their highland fields every tenth year or so. In Shwegu, however, there is unlimited space, and the villagers can afford themselves the luxury of leaving the ground unused for as much as thirty years, and until tall trees have grown up on it. The longer the ground is left the better, it is supposed, will be the paddy crop; and of course the Kachin has no sentiment whatever about destroying timber.

Tangde Bum was one of the peaks upon which beacons were lit for the Peace Celebrations. From its summit we had a fine view of the Irrawaddy near Bhamo, whence it enters the Second Defile and flows away past Shwegu to Katha. To the south lay the arc of Kodaung Hills from Mogok to Namhkam, which we shall explore later on.

From Tangde we marched along the finely wooded crest of the mountain for several miles to Taunggyi through beautiful scenery. We saw a sloth bear up a tall tree, and a gibbon which swung away through the jungle. These apes do not usually climb about like monkeys, but swing themselves gracefully from branch to branch with their long arms. Though heard regularly every morning, they are rarely seen, and in fact only go in pairs, and are much less numerous than might be inferred from the noise they make.

A steep descent brought us to the plains again on the far side of the range. Wild elephants are numerous in this low country, and indeed one of my parties, which I had detached on a separate mission, was chased by a tusker, and returned full of their adventure. In these deep forests I saw the blue-faced barbet, and at Maizang my Kachins dug out three fully fledged chestnut-headed bee-eaters from a bank in which they had their nest. This bee-eater, which has a bronze head, yellow throat and no protruding tail-quills, is found only in certain localities, but happens to be common both in Shewgu and Katha.

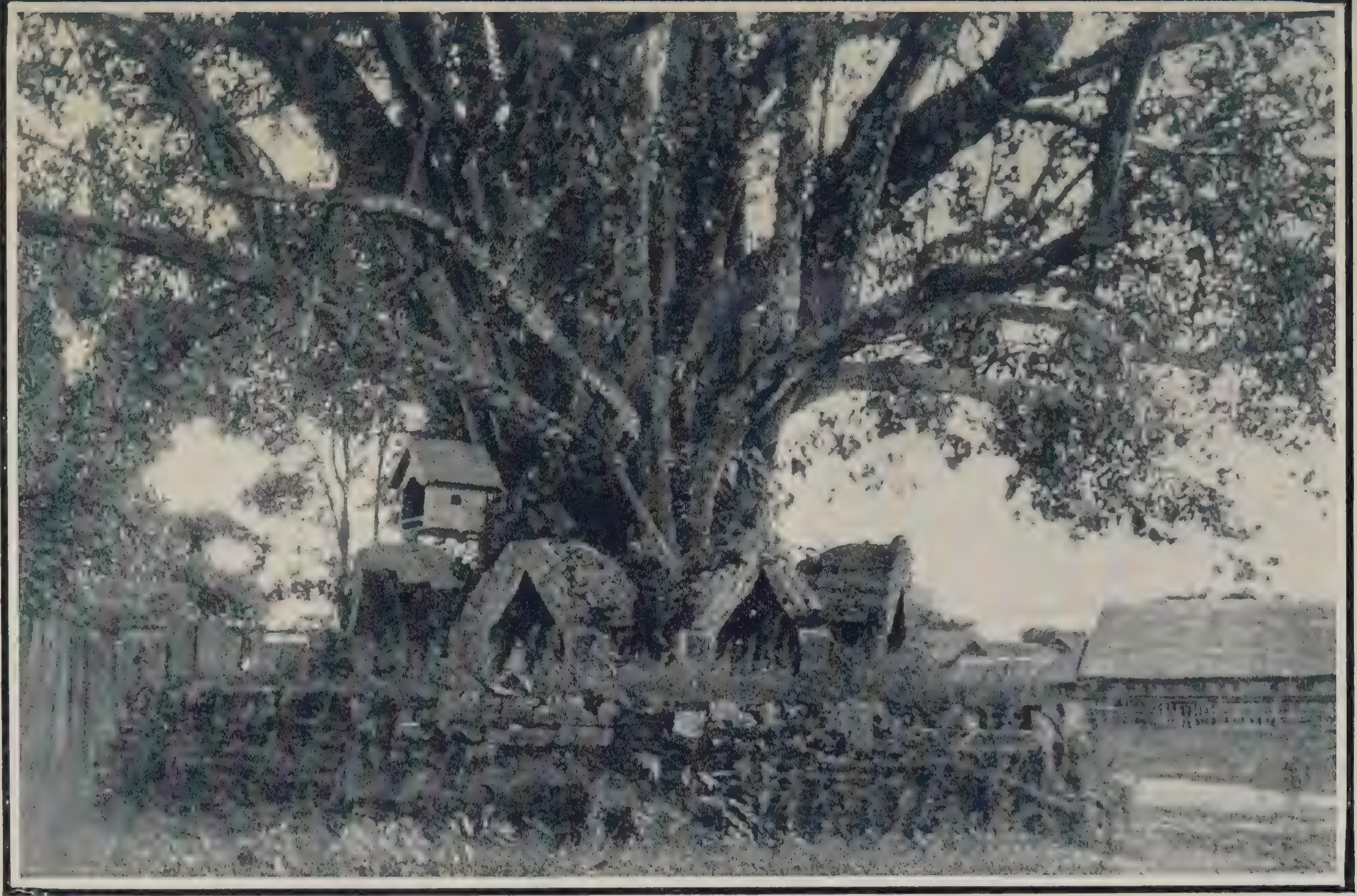
Shwegu, where we regained the Irrawaddy after a tour of three weeks in the interior, is a charming Burmese village strung out for about a mile along the river bank. Pagodas and monasteries rise from amongst the peepul and palm trees on the cliffs. In March the *Letpan Bin* (silk-cotton tree) and Bauhinia are loaded with blossom, and now in May gold-mohur filled the forests with a riot of colour.

Shwegu is noted for its fine red pottery, which is supplied far up and down the river. Ma Yu, the acknowledged expert in this business, copies jars, vases and tea-pots very successfully. Several distinct kinds of pottery are made at various places on the Irrawaddy. The black pottery of Ava, at one time limited to the manufacture of begging-bowls for *Phoongyis*, has since developed, and fine shallow bowls are now made which are popular with Europeans. Kyauk Myaung produces a highly ornamented glazed pottery with *Nats* and dragons entwined round pots and vases. Here also are made the so-called "Pegu jars," which are tied together as rafts and floated down the length of Burma, where they breed mosquitoes in every bathroom. I should like to see a notice in each rest-house in this country requiring visitors when leaving to personally see all water-jars turned upside down. Ornamental tiles and plaques have been made in Burma since remote ages. At one period there was evidently an extensive manufacture of clay pipes, which are found now scattered on the soil all over the country. They are still sometimes reset and smoked.

The inhabitants of the riverine areas of Bhamo, Shwegu and Katha are Shan-Burmese and Shan-Tayoks, both rather unsatisfactory peoples who keep much to themselves, and who cannot be relied on to furnish recruits or workers.

At Katha, a little farther down the river, a most interesting and mysterious people called Kadus are met. They are employed in large numbers by firms as timber-workers, road-makers, and elephant-drivers. Kadus are perhaps most numerous at Mansi, eighty miles west of Katha, where they live side by side with Shans. They have a language of their own, and are probably one of the earliest Tibeto-Burman races to reach Burma. On the other hand, some consider them to be merely Burmanized Chins. They are Buddhists, though with peculiarities of their own. For instance, Kadu *Phoongyis* do not go out to beg their food. The Kadus are nearly always remarkable for their diligence and reliability.

Katha, on the Irrawaddy, is linked by a short loop with the main railway line. It therefore proved a convenient centre for the concentration of Kachin recruiting parties from Myitkyina, Bhamo and Mogok whenever I had not time to go to these places myself. We had many a cheery and successful rendezvous at Katha Circuit House, where comrades of Mesopotamian days met from all directions with their respective recruits. These meetings were amongst the most strenuous and amusing. They had naturally a special and personal pleasure for me, which rendezvous with men of other than my own beloved unit could not have. I look back to them as the most delightful experiences of my recruiting duty. At one of these meetings Sau Nan (who had joined me a year previously, directly after Scott's death) enlivened matters by turning up with a charming girl. She was the daughter of the *Taung Ok* of Sinlum, and had run away with Sau Nan. It was no use protesting, and indeed the confidence with which pretty Ja Doi looked to me to arrange for her marriage and accommodation was disarming. She used me henceforth as gooseberry and paymaster, an insipid rôle later aggravated when the incident became almost international, and I *personally* was accused of abducting the prettiest girl in the Kachin Hills. Unfortunately no such luck! I only had the dirty work of baffling both Church and State. Ja Doi and Sau Nan had discarded their *Nats*, thereby making marriage by tribal rites impossible. They now proposed to marry in a Christian church, a decision which, since neither were yet even baptized, led to delicate negotiations with the clergy. Kachin tribal law, or, as it is called, the "Kachin Hill Regulation," is a tricky and not very consistent code. Apparently you can compound murder for a pig or two, but go to jail for eloping with your girl. There was an authentic case in 1920 of a man incurring a blood-feud because his host, while catching a chicken for dinner, fell and broke his neck. Manslaughter may be condoned for Rs.25, but the fine for killing a bison is Rs.125. Christians come under other rules for marriage, so that if outraged parents flourish a warrant it is just as well to turn Christian in a hurry. Another line of argument, however, was necessary to urge the Church to a swift administration of its comforts. I was soon involved in a maze of bishops, registers, catechisms, godfathers and giving-aways which I would certainly never face on my own behalf. With rare insight the Rev.



An Abode of Gods.

This sacred peepul tree is inhabited by *Nats*, or Godlings, for whose accommodation little houses have been built.

Edmonds, chaplain of Christ Church, Mandalay, discerned Sau Nan's real yearning and fitness, apart from the other urgent aspect of the situation. With commendable dispatch he baptized the aspiring couple on the 4th June (1920), and married them next morning. This is something of a record. The flight of wires and warrants stopped dead, and was only followed for a short while by a few dreary memos for future guidance in similar circumstances. I admire Mr Edmonds' initiative, and I believe he has never had cause to regret. Kachins, when they get religion, get it badly. Since that fatal day Sau Nan and Ja Doi have developed a formidable ritual for "grace." They sing the most dismal hymns whenever it is judged I am likely to permit it (which is not always); and they have, I am sure, sinister plans regarding my own conversion. Sau Nan assumed my own Christian name and became Colin Sau Nan; while Ja Doi, having failed to pronounce all other names, became Emily. Mr Edmonds himself gave her her ring; and a year later, after a general reconciliation, Sau Nan paid for her with two magnificent gongs and twelve tins of milk. All I got out of it was a tarnished reputation with the Government of Burma.

CHAPTER XI

LASHIO—TURF-LAND & DOWNS

(*See Map, Square D. J.*)

HAVING examined the Kachins in the various areas included in Bhamo, we will now briefly review the remaining Kachin districts, starting with Lashio in the south and working north along the frontier through Kodaung, Namhkam, Sinlum, Alaw Bum, and so to Sima and Sadon in Myitkyina. In doing so we shall incidentally fill in the whole gap between the countries described in my *Burmese Enchantment* and *Burmese Loneliness.*

Lashio is reached by rail from Maymyo. The train creeps giddily over the web-like bridge at Goteik at a height of 870 feet above the Goteik river, and thence travels in afternoon sunshine to Hsipaw and the Nam Hsam Falls, and so to Lashio in the twilight. We are now in the heart of the Northern Shan States. A frontier atmosphere is lent by the increasing number of Chinese, and by hill-folk (chiefly Kachin and Palaung) who mingle with the Shans. The frontier, however, is in fact some marches distant.

Lashio is one of the most peaceful places on earth. Its repose has been mildly stirred of late by the sudden development of roads, which already bear motor traffic in various directions. As usual, wherever roads are opened, the pleasure-loving people of this country immediately invest in motors. Lashio has already half-a-dozen. The future of the Burmese frontier lies in roads. Enlightenment follows them, just as crime follows railways. The influence of roads is benevolent, of railways materialistic, and for these reasons roads seem more suitable to the simple and backward folk who inhabit the Burmese borderland. Eighty miles of motor road lead south-east towards the Salween to Tang-Yan, and forty-nine north to Hsenwi and Kutkai. These are "State roads." They are not metalled, but merely faced with crushed stone laid loose upon the stiff red clay. The surface so obtained is sufficiently durable, provided there is not too much traffic—and there never is. Transport was always a vexed question till motors came to solve it. The Shan cart-man cannot endure the idea of work. He requires at least three days' notice to screw up sufficient energy to face it. He will now lapse into grateful repose, while the road and the motor continue to open up some of the most wonderful and charming country in Burma. Cars can get through from Lashio to the "frontier meetings" at Namhkam. From Namhkam the P.W.D. are opening a motor road to Bhamo, but of course how long they will take it is impossible to say. The country served in Lashio is high, fertile and thinly populated, and the possibilities of development, especially if Europeans discover it, are immense.

We will first glance briefly at the frontier beyond Tang-Yan and across the Salween.[1] It consists of an unadministered area occupied by Wild, or Head-Hunting, Wa; and south of that an administered area called Eastern Mang Lun, inhabited by a medley of Wa (40 per cent.), Kachins, Tai Loi, Muhso and Shans of mixed origin. There is, in actual fact, an inner or administered border, and an outer or unadministered border which includes the Wild Wa in British territory, but which the Chinese dispute. However, the attitude of the Wa is quite impartial; and since neither British nor Chinese are anxious to supply skulls for Wa harvest festivals, the quarrel remains unsettled. I have already given an account of Wa human sacrifices on page 33 of *A Burmese Loneliness*.

Captain French of the military police gave me a lucid account of his visit to Eastern Mang Lun, where he spent three and a half months with a column in 1921. It is likely that a motor road will shortly be extended trans-Salween, and a post established at Um-ot. Captain French and Major Tilly brought back good accounts of the Muhso, who, they consider, would make soldiers if cultivated first for a decade or two in the local military police. I met Muhso in Keng Tung, where they, and also the Kaw, are worthy of attention by military police and the army.

Like the Yawyin, both Wa and Lahu are known to the Chinese by colour names, such as Black and Red, according to the dress of the women. The Muhso live mostly in British territory, and are simply that section of the Lahu known to the Chinese as "Black Lahu." Both Wa and Muhso dress rather like Kachins, but the women have their own distinctive costumes.

. . . .

We will now travel north from Lashio along the Namhkam road. A thirty-three-mile run takes you over a range of hills, and down to the sleepy village and wide paddy plain of Hsenwi. Hsenwi was a place of importance in the days of Shan supremacy. From it is derived the name *Sinli*, by which Kachins always refer to this country. From Hsenwi a mule path and a motor road (respectively twelve and seventeen miles) climb to the Kutkai plateau. The Kutkai plateau is one of the most attractive places in Burma.

Imagine an almost limitless expanse of undulating turf-land, with distant hills, bold in outline, strung along the horizon on all sides. That is the Kutkai plateau—treeless, grassy, undulating, perhaps a trifle monotonous, but truly beautiful, and richly green. Mushrooms grow on the turf. Larks rocket up with joyful song. In May the English cuckoo is heard constantly. The plain is the haunt of the beautiful roller, the blue Chinese magpie and flocks of little red-faced waxbills; while partridges, literally in thousands, call for "The big hills! The big hills!" ("*Abum Kaba ba!*") from low bushes beside the road. This is typical Shan plateau. The bold little peaks, the open downs, the limitless turf, reminded me constantly of similar country west of the Salween between Taunggyi and Keng Tung. This plateau rises to 4500 feet at Kutkai, where the trim little Government buildings are mere dots on the turf-land, over which the white road runs like a ribbon across the swelling ground on its way to Namhkam.

The population is sparse. Palaung villages occur at long intervals, their fields making red patches on the grass-land. But the rest is "waste." It is wonderful that Europeans have not settled here in freedom and sunshine, instead of retiring with the common herd to the little tyrannies of life at home. This is ideal country for farming and grazing. The Palaungs breed ponies, though Kutkai is not free from *surra*; but a little farther on at 6000 feet Chinamen raise mules safely. The climate is comfortable, the rainfall about 70 inches, the altitude 4500 feet, and the scenery superb; though, as I say, at Kutkai, a trifle lonesome and depressing in its vast spaciousness. But farther on there are hundreds of square miles of emptiness, with every variety of charming scenery. Or you might sacrifice a thousand feet of elevation in favour of an outer plateau just above Hsenwi, and at the base of some rugged peaks called Loi Sam Sip (Thirty Hills). Here, within a mile of the motor road, and within thirty-six hours of Rangoon, is delightful country with wood, water and stone in plenty. It is difficult to say which of all these places is most attractive; and there is almost equally desirable country in the Southern Shan States, as accessible, and considerably higher. Kalaw and Taunggyi are respectively 4300 and 4700 feet. Lashio is just under 3000 feet, and Kutkai is 4500.

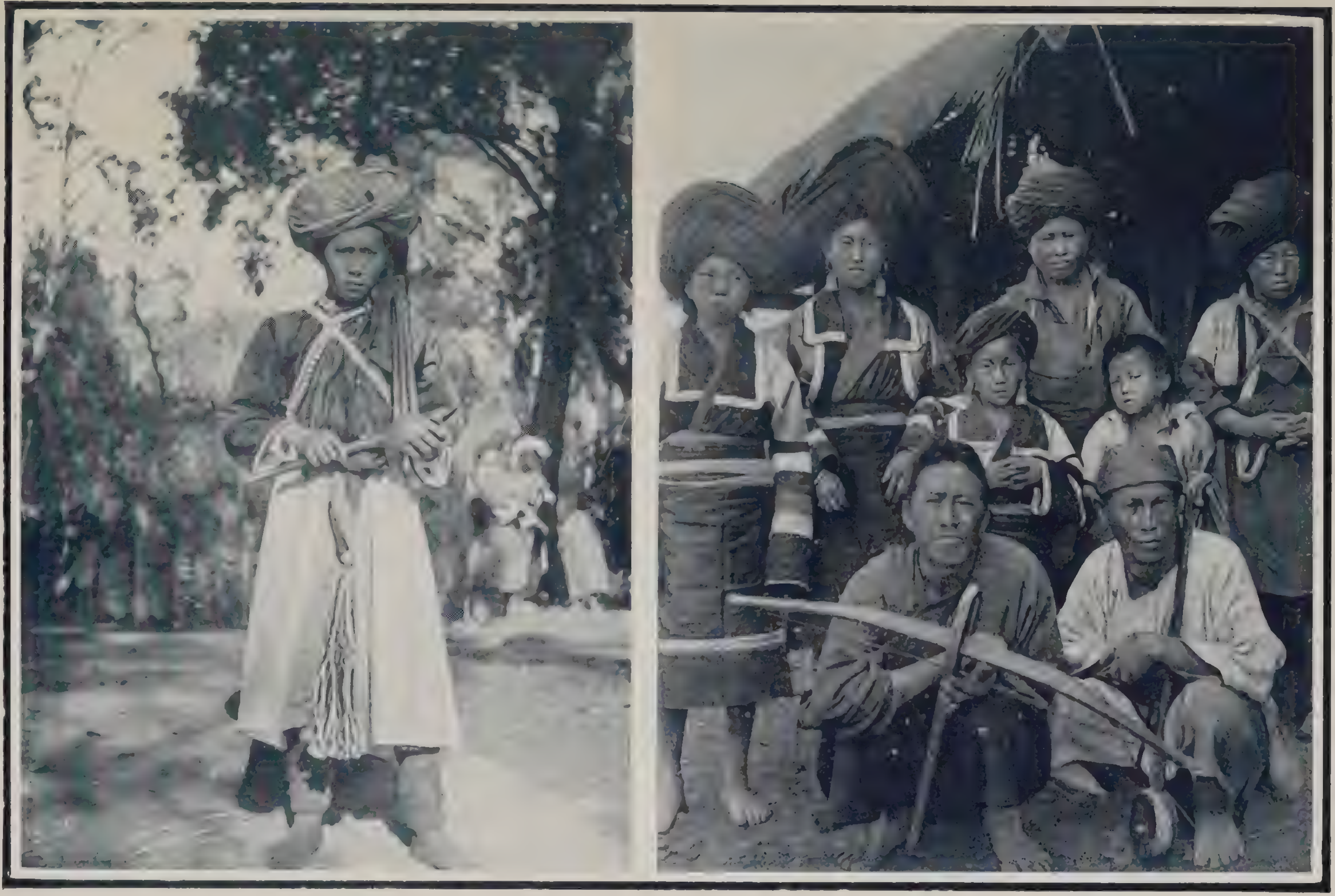
In Kutkai I visited Sara Seng Li's school, where thirty little boys were attending. I was struck with their cleanliness. Most of them were Kachins and Atsis, but there were also some Shans, and three delightfully grave little Chinese. I ordered them a football, and was touched to receive in return an embroidered bag from Sara Seng Li's wife.

The country beyond Kutkai is hilly and extremely pretty, with alternating woodland and open downs, the latter not so extensive as hitherto. A hundred delicious little valleys of emerald turf have each a charm of their own. Heavy downpours of rain and tremendous claps of thunder occurred daily at noon, followed for some days more by a persistent drizzle good for all the world, except travellers. However, in a country of regular climate one has no business to be touring the frontier in the rains. It was already the middle of May (1921). After the 30th all touring ceases. The smaller military police posts are withdrawn, and we met them coming in, their mules led by Chinese muleteers beating soft-toned gongs. There are no proper rest-houses in these hills, so we were compelled reluctantly (!) to accept Kachin hospitality either in their houses or preferably in granaries.

These, except for the fact that they have been scientifically spat over from floor to roof, are clean! and we were in fact glad enough to cover up the red stains with matting, and so avoid sodden and filthy camps outside. Nevertheless the tour ended for me with a most painful and troublesome attack of eczema which I shall not forget in a hurry.

On the whole, Burma is healthy for Europeans, provided you keep out of jungles and avoid touring in the rains. Unfortunately I could observe neither of these precautions, and as a result of three years' incessant travel contracted malignant malaria. Jungle marches in the rains are utterly fatal. I was interested to note that the Education Department is considering the discontinuance of frontier inspections during the wet season. Such a policy would save many lives and much suffering.

We had by now, of course, taken to mule transport, marching first to Nam Hpalun, and then to Gangba, where we halted to attend the market. Gangba is a considerable village with a mixed population of Kachins and Palaungs. The two communities live strictly separate, and about a mile apart, and meet only on market days. And indeed the exclusiveness of these small races, who ignore each other like two communities of ants, must have been necessary for each to preserve its purity through several centuries of time. The Palaung houses have the gable-ends covered in, and are also raised higher off the ground than Kachin



Lisu Types.

The Lisu boy holding the pipes comes from the trans-Salween parts of the Southern Shan States (see p. 134). Notice his pigtail. Note also the voluminous turbans of the women and the cross-bow held by one of the men on the right.

houses. The lower part is fenced in and occupied by cattle. In this Palaung village there is a little stone shelter over the well, and a stone bridge, such as one sees frequently on the Namhkam plain. These works in stone again denote the world of difference between these Palaung and Kachin neighbours. The Palaung are Mons from China, probably the first arrivals in Burma; while the Kachins are of Tibetan origin, and represent the latest wave of immigration. Here, in Gangba, the two have settled together, each ignoring the other, but in spite of racial differences not widely unlike in physical appearance.

The Kachins throughout Lashio are prosperous and comparatively clean. I was struck with the fact that, to judge from the number of horns hung up in the house porches, few cattle are sacrificed to the *Nats*. Cattle in lowland villages are probably too valuable for ploughing. The fields are often neatly fenced with turf walls. The men wear a loose, divided trouser which they say is Palaung, but which closely resembles that worn by certain Kachins in the north.

The people in the market-place at Gangba were distinctly amusing. Much of their business consisted of exchanging leaves, roots, vegetables and jungle products amongst themselves—the Palaung and Kachin women driving the hardest possible bargains with each other for one leaf more, or one root less. Many kinds of fungi are sold at this season, and some are delicious, particularly a large white toadstool of alarming appearance, which the Kachins call *Makawk-mati*. They have no use at all for the true mushroom, and indeed there exist some dangerous imitations of it. At this season also we obtained a new and black raspberry, very sweet and nice, called *Ga-daw si*, the importance of which is that it ripens just when the yellow *Shaka si* is over. With a little French wine added, it is excellent.

The longer I live out East the more I incline to vegetarian diet. I have long avoided my kitchen as an incurable chamber of horrors. The slightest acquaintance with *Nat* sacrifices explodes the happy illusion that liver-and-bacon grow up together automatically in brown gravy, or that kidneys are cultivated on toast. After a pretty extensive experience in these matters, I would rather any day eat a plate of comparatively harmless toadstools.

A few Yawyin women mingled with the crowd. Their dress is unusual, being plain dark blue, without gay colours. They were too shy to tell us what class they were, but others of the same dress met later at Pang-gai said they were Bya Pa (Bee People). They told me they were Black Lisu, and had come from Yünnan two generations ago. They looked very unhealthy.

The population of these Kutkai Hills is arranged as it usually is in the Shan States. The Shans, with a sprinkling of Chinese, occupy the broad valleys and plateaux. The hills above are inhabited by simpler, hardier hill-folk. The distribution of these is confused, Kachins, Atsis, Gauris, Lashis, Palaungs, Yawyins and Marus being scattered indiscriminately over the country, and often occupying the same villages. The occurrence of Marus is surprising. All these people are bilingual, Shan being spoken when they meet in the markets held every fifth day in many villages. The Shans, of course, are the most numerous, civilized and wealthy, and our poor Kachins are of very secondary importance, at least in the estimation of the Shans. The Shans speak of both Marus and Kachins as *Hkang* (savages). Across the Salween, in Eastern Mang Lun, the population, as we have seen, is even more confused, and includes Wa and Muhso.

It is by no means easy in Burma to grasp the peculiarities of each district, especially if these are visited in rapid succession. In fact to do so needs hard work. Each area is a little world in itself, with its own speech, its own problems, and its own geographical and ethnological features. The distribution of the races is confused; the languages and dialects distracting. I have not found it very difficult to fill in details. Travel in itself is an education and a great inspiration. But to establish a framework of broad facts and principles for each district, so necessary if work like mine is to be efficient and consistent, *has been* immensely difficult, and, I may say, has involved much strain, labour and concentration. It is beyond human capacity to be expert in more than one or two subjects in a country so complex. For the rest, one must use one's ears and eyes, and sift the masses of information often acquired in disjointed order.

I believe firmly in the value of seizing impressions fresh and warm in the field, and setting them down in spite of interruptions, in spite of the ricketiness of camp tables, and the sweat that splashes on the paper. Flies disturb the dignity of style, and mosquitoes conspire to destroy the even flow of ideas. Above all, there is a dreadful mental darkness until in inspired moments the subject is poured forth and takes shape in words. Something of that inspiration survives future destructions. Few know the anguish with which books are written, the revolutions that beset them, the affection lavished upon them, the defeats and disappointments passed, until the work approaches, but never reaches, its author's ideal.

Hâtez-vous lentement :
Et sans perdre courage,
Vingt fois sur le métier
Remettez votre ouvrage.[2]

The administrative divisions on this frontier are in themselves confusing, and suggest greater differences than actually exist. Each is approached by widely divergent systems of rail or steamer. You travel east to Lashio and north to Myitkyina, and this suggests a wide separation between two extreme districts actually only 300 miles apart. You can walk through the hills from Lashio to Myitkyina in quite a few days, and without meeting any obstacles. Kachin migrations, which appear so mysterious, are really following a most obvious route to open country in the south. This frontier as a whole is less diverse than it appears. The diversity of races is pretty constant. Only their proportions and their development vary. The character of the country is the same throughout. The great northern plains of Myitkyina, Bhamo and Loije are Shan plains, no less than those of Namhkam and Lashio in the south. But in the north Kachins predominate, and in the south Shans; and in each there is a tendency to ignore small minorities.

It is in this sense that ethnological divisions are valuable, in order that minorities may be joined to their own people, and their interests so secured. Our present frontier districts may be historical, but they certainly have no relation either to ethnology or geography. For instance, what was till lately the hilly part of Mogok is now incorporated *en bloc* with the Shan States, without regard to natural features. Had the Shweli river become the boundary between Bhamo and the Shan States, it would have been a true geographical division, automatically transferring Palaungs to their race kinsmen in the Shan States, and uniting the large Kachin community of Kodaung to the essentially Kachin district of Bhamo. It would further have avoided the deterioration that threatens Kachins when associated with Shans. Such deterioration is real, though I think at present over-estimated.

The Kachins of Lashio, who are under Shan influence, are generally supposed to be *vastly* inferior to northern Kachins. That, however, was not my experience at all, either during my brief tour of the hills, or in my much wider observations in the army. The degree of degeneracy is much exaggerated, though undoubtedly in future generations it will develop. The misconception is perhaps due to the fact that residents in the Shan States do not generally acquaint themselves with the Kachin language. It must be conceded at once that Kachins close down amongst the Shans *have* deteriorated. Also that easy, low, rich country must tend towards deterioration. But there has yet hardly been time for it to take effect. Many families have only been established three generations and still marry amongst northern Kachins. Others are but recently arrived, have relatives elsewhere, and claim other homes besides those occupied in Lashio. Besides, many Kachin villages lie in mountainous country, and on hill-tops, anything but easy in situation. It must be conceded again that Lashio Kachins have taken to *skikoing* with a "*Jau ha, Jau ha*," rather disconcerting to their apologists; but this is the inevitable result of an unnatural subjugation. A strong military connection will do much to restore self-respect, and preserve true Kachin customs. Thirty years ago the Kachins were the top-dogs, and were hustling the Shans very rudely. In 1899 they burned Hsenwi. Their activities have been cut short and their menace removed only by British occupation. Their numbers, and the great size of the country, seem to justify a separate officer for their administration and enlightenment.

The weather improved, and we struck up into higher hills to Namje, a large village of forty houses strung along the level ridges of a hill-top. These uplands are high, steep and densely wooded. The jungles throb with the shrill of tree-crickets, and here and there we saw silver pheasant. I was surprised at the size of some of these mountain villages. At Namje and elsewhere we held meetings after dinner, but, as is always the case, had difficulty in inducing more than a few people to attend. However, the Lahpai *Duwa*, Seng Tawng, a nice, willing fellow, did his best; and the meeting went off with the usual humour and good feeling.

Gangba and Namje are at feud over some paddy-land, though heaven knows there must be enough for all. The Gangba people showed us the fields trampled, and the fence thrown down, just after they had sown seed. Next day they seized a Namje buffalo as a reprisal, and Namje appealed to me. I was able to arrange the return of the buffalo, but *Du* Seng Tawng told me the quarrel was one of three years' standing.

At Pang-gai the *Myoza* was ill, and had been so for three years. In the granary in which we stopped he keeps ready his coffin of odina wood against the day of his release. You have only to step a little aside from the main road to find the resigned and fatalistic east. Yet even here old men tell you vaguely, and without quite knowing how or why, that "Times are changed" ("*Prat kalai sai*"). I have heard those words often and often in remote places, where no evidence of change is noticeable. Still, even there, apparently, some subtle, mysterious influence is at work, bringing it home to conservative Kachin elders that "Times are changed."

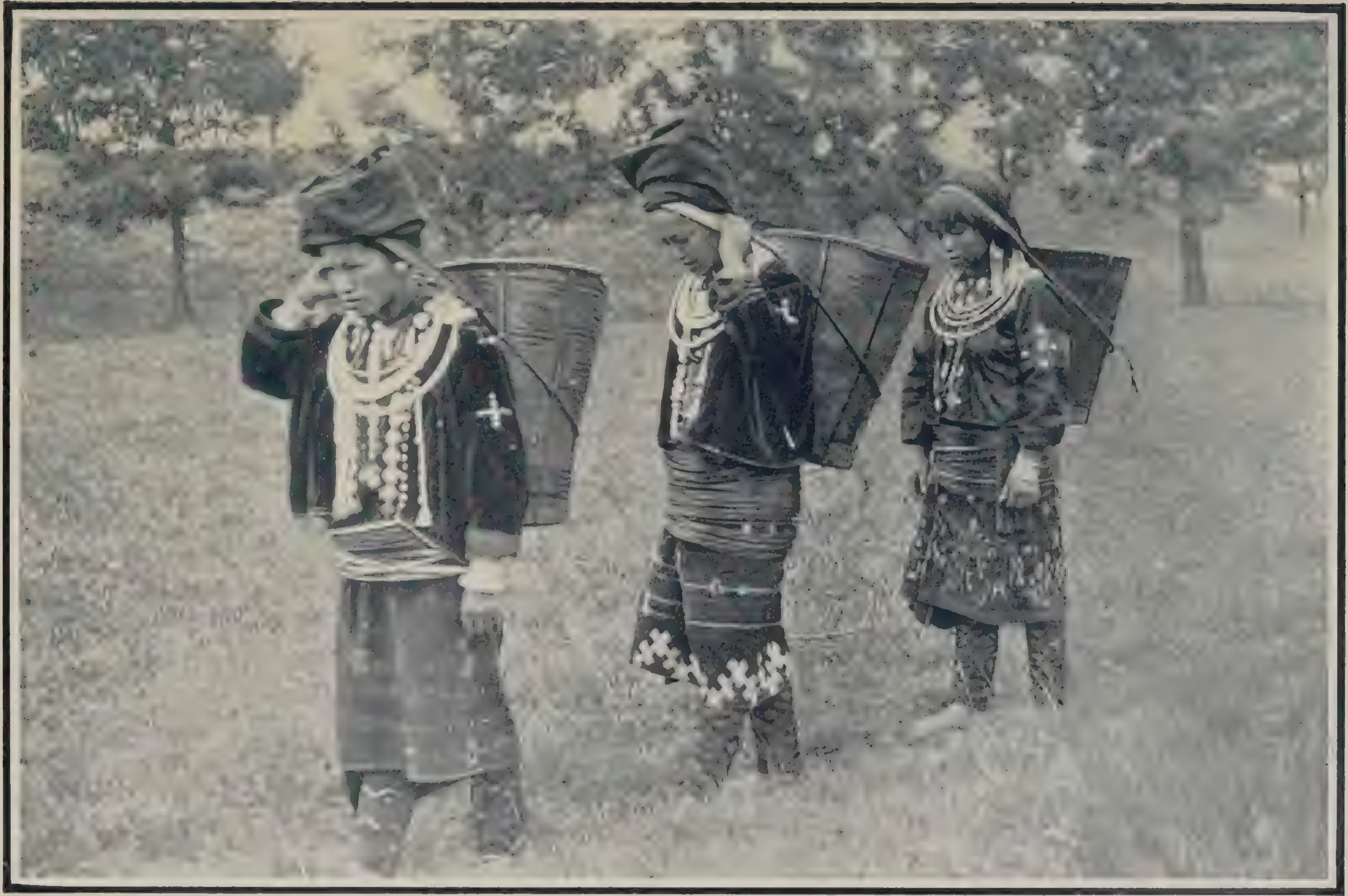
The title of *Myoza* sounds strange as applied to Kachins, but here a good many Kachins have purely Shan names, like Hkun Seng. The names of these Kachin villages are nearly all Shan—such as *Nam Hpalun* (Creeper Stream), *Namje* (Paper Stream), and *Pang-gai* (Far from the Camp). *Kutkai* seems to mean Crooked Sale. The name Lashio, they say, is derived from *La* and *Shiao*, meaning the hammering of the *La*. *Shiao* was described to me in Kachin as *U-gawn*, which indicates hammering as of a chisel. Probably, however, the word is one of pre-Shan origin, to which the well-known inventive habit of both Shans and Burmans has supplied an entirely new significance.

Ka-hpyet Pa (Slash Plain) is a lovely open valley, to which we descended in time for the usual "fifth-day market." Here again, we met a mixed crowd. A timely storm drove the people into a shed where we had them at our mercy till the rain stopped. The absence of all authority in Kachin villages makes it extremely difficult to collect the people together. The best audiences are often obtained in these markets, without the trouble of climbing heart-breaking hills. The people are curious, readily amused, and representative of many villages, to which they return nicely primed with wine. The *charu* drunk at these markets is, in fact, rather a nuisance, though the people are seldom anything but maudlin, and very smelly, in their cups. Here relays of *Salangs* invaded my hut, headed by Sau Kawng, the capable *Du* of Muwun. The friendliness of these people was touching. They expressed pleasure at what they had been told—and I believe they were sincere.

The spitting habit of these Kachins is truly unbearable, and without parallel in any northern district. The Government rest-sheds are plastered with gobs, to which my visitors added as a matter of course. Obviously they had not been taught otherwise, and I would have given a great deal to witness their education under Clerke, who had then just arrived as Assistant Superintendent. I can imagine a *Duwa*, after one warning, lean forward from force of habit and spit a second time through a crack in the floor. I imagine Clerke, or indeed any northern *Bum Duwa*, recoil from the mess as from a viper. There will ensue a period of panic, chaos and shouts for water, soap, phenyle, permanganate and a scrubbing-brush. The little tragedy in such cases is prearranged, and the properties handy. Business ceases for an hour while the *Duwa* scrubs again and again the offensive spot, and while his neighbours for miles round note mentally that you can pester a *Bum Duwa*, wake him and disturb him cruelly—but never, *never* spit on his floor.

Motors are little use without petrol—and this elementary fact we learned at bitter cost on our return to Kutkai. With all the recruits we had to walk, covering the forty-five miles to Lashio in thirty hours. Such a tragedy might well have led to desertions with any but Kachin recruits. But in spite of this disappointment there was no complaint, and when one poor lad who had looked forward to the drive exclaimed regretfully, "Oh, motor car, ee!" there was a shout of laughter.

Though unwelcome, this walk enabled us better to appreciate the beauty of the country round Lashio. Twice we passed hot springs, and often rested beneath magnificent peepul-trees. The little wayside shops which lured us with food, fruit and tea reminded me of the tea-shops of Japan; and the farewells, in broken Burmese, of pretty, red-cheeked Shan girls—"*Pye-bye thwa*" ("Go slowly")—were no less charming than the "*Sayonaras*" of Nipon. Three miles from Lashio, and just when we were exhausted and the heat oppressive, we came to a busy market, where we rested and slaked our thirst with cucumbers. Here we encountered the gilded youth of Lashio—lanky Shan boys in pure white, with pale pink fillets and pale mauve sashes. Their enormous, floppy panamas, with jade-green strings falling to the knee, kept the sun from their fair complexions. Their delicate and melting hues,



MARKET DAY.

Every fifth day there are Markets, to which the people come down from all the surrounding mountains. This custom was described centuries ago by Marco Polo.

and their *beautiful* attire suggested ice-creams, and bespoke an enlightenment incapable of such a folly as forty-five miles in thirty hours. They looked to us indeed quite offensively cool as they eyed our travel-stained Kachins with compassion—little dreaming that the next victims of this sweating *Hkun* in khaki would be *themselves*!

NOTES

[1] Map, Square E. J.

[2] Boileau.

CHAPTER XII

KODAUNG—A JEWEL & NINE HILLS

(*See Map, Square D. J., and Inset Map, Square C.*)

KODAUNG is another important Kachin area. Mogok, from which Kodaung is usually approached, is fifty-nine miles by motor road from Thabeik-kyin on the Irrawaddy. The population of Mogok is largely Shan. The Shan States are close by. These hills were overrun by Shans for centuries, and even the local Burmese have Shan blood in them. They spend their time dreaming of rubies, and of fortunes that are sometimes picked up out of the mud, or cut from unpromising stones. Maingthas and Chinamen are almost exclusively employed in the ruby mines. The Maingthas are hardy, industrious people, whose time is divided between the mines and their paddy-fields. Most of them come from across the Chinese border at La-hsa, and from areas north-east of Namhkam. They are Buddhists and Confucists.

Mogok is a valley encircled by bold, grassy mountains, and we must pause in our journey to look at it. A tin town and some abandoned ruby mines occupy a good deal of the valley bottom, but at one end a level polo ground has been made by letting the river enter a disused mine and silt it up. The pleasant houses of the Civil station occupy one side of the valley, and ruby mines are worked on the other. Above all rise green, lofty mountains.

Practically the whole Mogok area is ruby-bearing. Most other precious stones, except diamonds and emeralds, are also found. Mogok sapphires are sometimes large and of great beauty. Rubies are rather out of fashion in Europe, but good markets are found for them in Madras and Bombay, where the war did not seriously affect the buying power of the public. The performances of the *Emden*, however, very seriously threatened the ruby trade at the time. But on the day Peace was signed the finest ruby perhaps the world has ever seen, now known as the "Peace Ruby," was dug up by the Burma Ruby Mines Company, and sold uncut for three lakhs of rupees. It was expected to weigh 23 carats when cut, and is a flawless gem of the finest colour and quality. Large rubies may have been found in Burmese times, but as all such gems were commandeered by the king, they were, when possible, secretly broken up into smaller bits.

The Peace Ruby is really a marvellous jewel—a little pebble of burning light. Uncut it weighs 42 carats, and its discovery sent the Company's £1 shares up from 2s. to 12s.

Shortly after this find a private Burmese miner dug out a remarkable sapphire which may possibly eclipse any known sapphire. I had the unique experience of holding these two stones in my hand together—the bright, burning ruby, and the blue sapphire, still rough, sombre and uncertain—each perhaps the largest and finest of its kind in the world.

Many curious customs survive from Burmese times, and are now incorporated in the mining regulations. Thus women, but not men, are allowed to wash for rubies in any stream. Hundreds of women make a living in this way. Small stones thus obtained are used as watch jewels, for embroidery, or for making "constructed rubies," which are created by fusing ruby fragments together. "Constructed rubies" were, at one time, serious rivals, until jewellers learned to distinguish microscopically between the angular bubbles of a true ruby and the globular bubbles of a constructed one. A "synthetic ruby" is made entirely by chemical processes, and is easily detected by experts. All forms of unauthorized digging are now prohibited in Mogok. The picking up of a stone is technically an offence. Not long ago an old woman foolishly admitted having found a splendid sapphire on the bank, instead of in the bed of the stream close by. This was an offence. She was imprisoned "till the rising of the court," but received, under the chivalrous rules, a one-third share amounting to Rs.6000.

The Burmese mine either by means of surface trenches, or by sinking pits into ruby-bearing strata. Three men are necessary for sinking a pit, and therefore licences are only issued to a minimum of three men.

The Burma Ruby Mines Company employs two processes. The newest method is by washing down the soil with a jet of water. The mud and ooze thus washed flow into a basin. Into this basin a pipe is led from far up in the hills, so that the pressure of the water from it is enormous. On leaving the pipe, the water immediately enters another pipe, sucking up mud and stones with it, and shooting them into troughs, where the rubies and gravel are caught and afterwards sorted.

The older method is complicated, and requires much more labour and machinery. The earth is dug, put into trollies, hauled up a long incline, dumped into troughs, and passed by water into a series of revolving cylinders pierced with holes of various sizes. In this way the stones are sorted according to size, and the most likely gravels are then examined by Europeans. Less likely gravels are sorted by Maingthas and Chinamen. In this process extraordinary precautions are taken. Everyone watches everyone else. The men work in a locked enclosure, in garments without pockets, and with gauze cages locked over their heads to prevent them from swallowing rubies. The refuse gravel discarded after examination is hired out to women for Rs.200 a month, and they make something out of it by "gleaning." Coins and flint axe-heads have been found by sorters in the gravel.

There is an interesting Yawyin colony at Bernardmyo, an abandoned hill station high up in the mountains ten miles from Mogok. Bernardmyo must be 6000 feet. It was once a military cantonment. The materials of which its barracks were built have been used to erect a comfortable rest-house. Only the old cemetery remains, and the magazine, which is now occupied by cattle. This delightful retreat is reached by a good mule-path over the hills, whose open, grassy slopes are spangled with wild flowers. Far below Mogok nestles in its valley, with bold mountains rising about it. Higher up, the road passes through splendid forests, before finally dropping to open pasture-land at Bernardmyo.

Bernardmyo is an example of the devastating effect of *taungya* cultivation, especially of Yawyin *taungyas*. From deep forests you suddenly emerge on to bare hills, upon which not a single tree remains. It must be admitted that from the æsthetic point of view the havoc is a distinct improvement. The open, rolling hills of Bernardmyo rise charmingly above a long valley rich with paddy-fields. The scenery is decidedly attractive. Ponies and cattle graze amongst the grass and bracken and have, by their browsing, prevented the forest from springing up again. Mules are bred here. One or two Panthe villages are passed. Dotted about over the valley are six or eight villages belonging to Lisu (Yawyins). These are the culprits who have successfully destroyed at least ten square miles of forest.

It is rare to find Lisu anywhere but on the extreme tops of hills. Here they occupy a rich valley; but the climate is bracing enough for them, and there is even plenty of ice on the streams in winter. This colony forms a "pocket" all on its own, though a few Lisu live also in the high ranges between Kodaung and Northern Hsenwi. There was a sudden Lisu influx from China in 1907. At that time little was known of them. Their military value was never dreamed of, and indeed they were discouraged from settling because of their *taungya* habit. There are now believed to be about 1350 Lisu in the Mogok district, but, as far as I know, only those far away in the north round Bhamo and Sima have ever enlisted. I satisfied myself entirely that these "Lishaws," as they are locally termed, are the same race as the Lisu, Lolo, or Yawyin, of whose military qualities I have already spoken. Both men and women are of really splendid physique. Their language has only dialectic differences from the usual Yawyin. They also speak Chinese, but in this case not Kachin. The houses are like ordinary Yawyin houses—that is, they are small wooden huts, and the floors are not raised on posts. The dress of the women differs only slightly from the usual pretty Yawyin costume. It consists of a huge dark blue turban, and a blue "kimono," with an apron before and behind. There is a broad red band at the elbow, and silver ornaments are worn in the ears and round the neck. A curious tassel of red and yellow ribbons hangs down behind, just like a tail.

Each house has a garden growing Indian corn. The villages are full of peach-trees, whose branches at the end of August are laden with delicious ripe fruit. Potatoes, the use of which is said to have been learned from the former garrison, are also cultivated.

A memorable day of sunshine, fresh breeze and keen appetite on the high grassy slopes of Bernardmyo has left a vivid impression on my mind.

. . . .

Kodaung, however, is still many days' journey distant. A tour from Mogok through Kodaung to Namhkam, and thence out again via Sinlum and Bhamo, involves a march of 267 miles through fairly rough country. It took me a month and three days to accomplish—*i.e.* from the 14th November to the 17th December 1919.

At Mogok I engaged eight mules and two excellent Chinese drivers. Much depends on the behaviour of one's muleteers, and I was lucky in securing a splendid lad, called Syau De, whose cheeriness and physical strength went far towards making the expedition a success. My intention now was to open up recruiting in Kodaung, and to explain the meaning of the new Kachin battalion to all the villages *en route*.

Immediately beyond Mogok the mule road climbs up through forests into a mountain region—a beautiful upland of hill-tops, precipices and steep, grassy slopes, where grow a profusion of alpine flowers. Such few villages as exist are inhabited by Shans and Chinese.

Descending thence, we reached Momeik on the third day.

The little town of Momeik lies in a paddy plain, and is the capital of a Shan state of the same name. A Sawbwa lives here, and Kodaung is (or was then) part of the Momeik state. But in practice the Sawbwa has nothing whatever to do with Kodaung, and never enters it. Though passing as a Shan, he is very probably of Palaung origin, and there is not much love lost between Animist Kachins and Buddhist Palaungs. Momeik is the end of civilization in this direction. There are no more post and telegraph offices for 151 miles, until you emerge at Panghkam in Bhamo.

Leaving Momeik, we plunged into forests which extend unbroken for three days' journey to Molo. There is something depressing about continuous jungles like these. The stillness is so deep, the undergrowth so rampant beneath the tall trees, and on all sides creepers, grasses and saplings are engaged in a grim, silent struggle to survive by overwhelming each other. Even the birds, though numerous and melodious enough at times, seem overawed occasionally by the sombre stateliness of the jungle. The path, often overgrown, is trodden into holes by wild elephants, and cut to pieces by the hoofs of buffaloes. It winds in and out of low undulations till all sense of direction is lost. No glimpse is allowed of the surrounding country. There are no villages, and the only people met are those engaged in dragging teak logs to the choked streams, which will rise sufficiently some day to float the timber out into the Shweli.

Molo,[1] the little centre from which Kodaung is administered, lies in an open paddy plain beside the Shweli river. Here I waited a couple of days for Mr Cameron, the Assistant Superintendent of Kodaung, with whom I now travelled for more than a week. Cameron has taken a keen interest in recruiting. It was largely due to him that 43 Kachins from Kodaung served in Mesopotamia. At least 55 men joined the 85th Burma Rifles during the war, and probably there were more for whom I cannot account.

The Shweli is 150 yards broad at Molo in December, and is subject to sudden rises. It passes down from China through beautiful hills to its junction with the Irrawaddy at Inywa. There are about twenty rapids between Molo and Myitson, but they are not serious and launches can ascend as far as Myitson. Large quantities of bamboo are floated down the Shweli to the wood depot at Inywa, where they are required as supports for the heavy-timber rafts collected there. Bamboo, teak and other timbers are extracted in large quantities from Kodaung. The Palaungs grow a good deal of tea, which is sold all up and down the Irrawaddy, especially at Kyauk Myaung, whence it goes to Shwebo, and so up the railway even to Myitkyina. The Palaungs also breed ponies. These ponies are gelded by Chinamen, who come down in

November specially to perform the operation, at which they are said to be very skilful. Cotton is grown low down near the Shweli. The Kachins rear cattle, and higher up in the Kodaung cultivate the lac insect.

The name *Kodaung* means "Nine Hills," and, strictly speaking, refers to the left bank of the Shweli only. But the term has now come to include both banks. The right bank is properly known as *Kyauk-daung*, or "Six Hills"; while a portion of the adjacent state of Hsenwi is spoken of as *Nga-daung*, or "Five Hills."

The Momeik state is inhabited by Shans, Palaungs, Kachins, Yawyins and a few Marus. The Shans live on the plains of Momeik and Molo, and close down along the Shweli, which river passes through the whole length of Kodaung. Formerly the Palaungs occupied the right bank of the Shweli, where their pagodas may still be seen in the jungle. But they have been driven out of there by the Kachins, and are now only found on the left bank, where the Kachins even followed them, and were in process of hunting them out altogether when British occupation put a stop to such activities. Palaungs are most numerous in the neighbouring Shan state of Taungbain.

Thus the right bank of the Shweli is now exclusively Kachin; and the left bank is Palaung, with large Kachin settlements, as at Loi-ya. Yawyins occupy the mountain-tops.

The Palaungs are of Mon origin—that is to say, they are related to the Annamites, Wa, Riang and Talaing—

and are believed to have come from Yünnan, where they lived for centuries south of the Nan-chao Shans. They are indeed perhaps the earliest settlers in Burma, and are thought to have migrated from the upper reaches of the Shweli via the Wa country. They are now once more closely associated with Shans in Kodaung, Lashio, and especially in Taungbain. Farther north in Bhamo and Myitkyina they were certainly expelled from the Gauri Hills, and from the country of Sadon. The latter area is now occupied by Lashis and Marus, who penetrated from Wawchang (Htawgaw) eight or nine generations ago.

The Palaungs, of course, never call themselves *Palaungs*, which is only the Burmese name for them, but refer to themselves as *Hkun Loi*, which in Shan means "Hill Men." One is reminded by this of the Tai Loi of Keng Tung, whose name means "Hill Shan." Even the Kachins are simply called "Hill Tops" in polite Chinese. There are in fact few races in Burma who are popularly known by their proper native names. Even such important people as Myen-ma, Yakaing, Mon, Tai, Lisu and Chinghpaw are known to the world as Burmese, Arakanese, Talaing, Shan, Yawyin and Kachin.

The Palaungs are a fine-looking, industrious people. But though physically bigger than Kachins, they are said not to be so manly. They do not enlist, and efforts made to recruit them during the war for the Burmese Labour Corps failed. It is, however, hardly fair to judge them yet, or until they come under the influence of officials who speak their language. Only thus can the confidence of wild folk be won, and only so can they be encouraged to enter new forms of service. On the Burmese frontier shy tribes go through a period of apprenticeship as servants of officers or employés of firms. The next step is employment as village and civil police. Then follows service in the military police; and after that perhaps they may enter the Regular Army. The Kachins have taken twenty years to pass through this schooling, and I have no doubt but that Palaungs, and many other tribes besides, will do as well in time. We had Kachins of Palaung extraction even in Mesopotamia, and found them a thorough success. One (Mi Htoi Naw) rose to be a Havildar.

The Palaungs are Buddhists, but their Buddhism is much stricter than that of the Shans, and their *Phoongyis* (monks) indulge in none of the scandalous laxity of Shan monks.[2] They have local *Nats* peculiar to themselves, as, for instance, the spirit of a fugitive Sawbwa of Momeik who was murdered, and whose shrine is now seen in most Palaung villages.

The men dress like Kachins, but the women retain their own national costume. This consists usually of a blue jacket, skirt and gaiters, and a red collar. Cane hoops, and often a broad silver band, are worn round the waist. Some of the women wear red and blue caps, and others wear a small turban decorated with gay tassels. Girls leave the breast exposed until after marriage.

Numerous local legends relate to the immigration of the Palaungs into Kodaung. The name *Molo* itself is a corruption of *Möng Lo*, or *Möng Leur*, and means, "Place of Rest." They crossed the Shweli river at *Paung-gadaw*, a word derived from *Hpawng Ka-tawt* (Raft of Wild Plantains).

When the Shans from Yünnan overran Upper Burma the various chiefs adopted distinctive emblems. One carried a gong. Hence the name *Mogaung* or *Möng Kawng*, (Country of the Gong). The word *Wuntho* is derived from *Vying Hso* (Tiger Town). Another chief took a paddy bird and settled at *Möng Yang* (Place of the Paddy Bird). The name is now corrupted into *Möng Yin* or *Mohnyin*. The Momeik Sawbwa took a dagger as his emblem, and *Momeik*, or *Möng Mit*, as it is sometimes called, means "Place of the Dagger." Later a Joan of Arc arose who distinguished herself in hostilities against the Kachins. *Loi-ya* (Hill of the Woman) is named after her. There is also a legend about a woman being sent by the Chinese as a present to the Momeik Sawbwa. When examined, she was found to be rather old, and that place is called *Nang Hta* (Old Woman). A black chicken was killed on the journey at *Nam Kai Chang* (Stream of the Black Chicken); and when the Sawbwa sent her away in disgust the Burmese bearers wept with weariness, and set her down at *Man Hai* (Burmese Wept).

As the Kachins occupy the hills on the right bank of the Shweli river, we had to cross over in dug-outs, and then march day by day along the crests of the hills by inter-village tracks. The mules swam across, and in doing so one was unfortunately drowned. Our marches were now slowed down to six or seven miles a day, and even less. Recruiting would have been prejudiced had we travelled faster. But quite apart from that, I enjoyed these short, pottering stages. There was more time to study things and appreciate their meaning. Men are only known by side-lights thrown by speech or action upon the trivial incidents of daily life. Similarly the trees, flowers, birds and animals of the wonderful forests through which we travelled, and all the legend that has collected round them, can only be understood by sitting down and quietly watching them. I have often remarked how routine and the hurry of life dull the senses, while communion with nature opens the eyes to a hundred unexpected pleasures. One week of concentrated office work will leave you stone-blind, but I have observed with wonder the revival of perception from its drug. In that enlightened hour late official achievements (already consigned to files) pale in significance before the first discovery of the scarlet-backed flower-pecker.

In three years I walked 2150 miles, recruiting up and down these frontiers, and motored 1120 miles. I never rode. Walking is the best possible education, permitting as it does close observation and easy intimacy. I have wandered in a leisurely way along the whole Simo-Burmese frontier from Lashio to Hpimaw, a distance of 730 miles—sometimes spying upon shy little birds whose presence you might almost fail to note, sometimes listening for new words and expressions, sometimes rewarded with quaint sayings and legends, and marvelling always at the beauty of these forest uplands, and the variety of obscure races inhabiting them.

We entered many villages, and each night men and women crowded round our camp-fire to hear the gramophone. Later on I got Kachin, Maru and Yawyin records which had been prepared for the Linguistic Survey. These were listened to with delight.

Meanwhile the girls (those sturdy opponents of recruiting) surrendered to the attractions of needles and—it is hard to believe it—soap!

Labour on in faith and hope
(Mind she doesn't eat the soap).

Later the gramophone stopped, and lectures were delivered by Sau Nan, Sau Yaw and myself.

In this tour Cameron, their own Civil officer, also spoke to the people, urging them not to fall behind Bhamo in the matter of soldiering. In this he was warmly supported by all who were too old to go themselves. "*Rai nga ai,*" they said ("How true"). But the young men hung back coyly on the edge of the crowd until the gramophone resumed with some vulgar "laughing song" to wipe away the nasty taste of the lecture. And later still the crowd was driven forth into the night when we felt like bed. There was hardly an evening that one or two lads did not join up and march away with us next day. Others hesitated, followed us on some pretext or other, and made up their minds a camp or two farther on. It is typical of Kachin resolution that of all the recruits thus secured during three years, who left tearful homes behind and marched with us for days, even weeks, not a single one changed his mind, and *not a single one ran away*. Can it be seriously urged that this sort of recruiting breeds rebellion and suspicion? On the contrary, I am convinced that the people listened gladly and were intrigued, and that they understood at least that the Kachin battalion offers good employment. Such tours bear more fruit than that actually gathered on the spot. More lads join up later. In time they return home on leave set-up, intelligent and smartly dressed. They talk big and spend freely. So is the good seed sown and a footing gained.

> Catch him when he's barely twenty,
> Scrub him daily, good and plenty,
> Wind a turban long and red
> Fifty times around his head,
> Putties, rifle, bag and *dah*,
> Stand him up and there you are!
> What becomes of those who state
> Miracles are out of date?
> No Kachin before was seen
> So preposterously clean.
>
> R. Swinhoe.

It is refreshing (in these "progressive" days) to witness the intimacy between ruler and ruled that still exists in these benighted parts. There are no idealistic reforms. Here "shirt-sleeve justice" survives, and redress or help is administered at any time of day or night. And I learned, too, the cost of such "accessibility," and the unselfishness it demands from a "brutal bureaucrat" who must be ready at any time to lay aside book or pen. The Kachin is naturally sociable, and never hesitates to intrude. He likes to talk. He has no fixed hours for sleep, and he feels most lively just when civilized people think of going to bed.

Thus we wandered quietly along the hill-tops, halting at Loiwein, Konhka, Namlai and many other villages. At Saga Galé Cameron left me, and I proceeded alone towards Namhkam. Almost every camp had some special beauty of its own to recommend it. From each there were beautiful, extensive views across the Shweli Valley to the Palaung and Yawyin uplands, which rise to a height of six or seven thousand feet. Down the valley we could trace our march along the ridges, and distinguish the sharp lines of Loi Tok (4884 feet). Away back in the far distance lay the mountains of Mogok and Bernardmyo. Looking ahead, Loi Jau (6399 feet), the massive peak in which all these ranges culminate, dominated the scenery. Each day we got new views to the north-east over Shwegu, the Irrawaddy, Bhamo and Sinlum. Seas of white mist filled the Shweli Valley every morning. These vapour billows seemed to roll in and break upon the lower mountain spurs, while here and there small hills lifted their heads just above the sun-lit fog, like rocky islands beat upon by surf. And at sunset in the quiet evening light, these wide mountain panoramas assumed a soft and beautiful dignity not inferior to that of any Burmese scenery, except perhaps of Hpimaw.

The nights were very cold. We stoked up roaring bonfires, round which the villagers collected after dinner; and next morning we were glad to rake the embers together again and breakfast beside a fire in the chill sunshine. Here and there I found Kachin riflemen in their homes on leave or furlough. They were always so smartly turned out and so jolly. It was a pleasure to note their obvious superiority and self-respect. Amongst others, we met Maida Gam, our late mess orderly, in faultless shoes, socks and cherry-coloured trousers. At Saga Galé Jemadar N'Hkum Naw's mother, a fine, capable-looking old lady, came to see me, bringing also Rifleman Zau Li's wife and four children, who gave me eggs and wine. Zau Li's parents had seven sons and six daughters, of whom Zau Li (the seventh son) and two of the daughters survived childhood—three out of thirteen! I believe this is quite a typical case, and I quote it as an instance of the high mortality that occurs amongst Kachin children.

Just now (in early December) paddy crops were ripening both in the Kachin Hills and on the Shan plains. The *taungyas*, or hill fields, are gay and attractive at this season. The Kachin women are busy all day long reaping the mixed crop of paddy, beans, millet and Indian corn which come up together in confusion. Amongst them all grow a few sunflowers, which, by the way, Kachins call "moonflowers" (*Shăta Pan*). Two kinds of love-lies-bleeding (a red and a yellow) are now ready for the girls to stick in their ears. Huts, called *Yi wa*, are built on the steep hill-sides, so that the fore part protrudes high above the sloping ground, like the bowsprit of a ship. That to the Kachin it resembles something else is suggested by one of their riddles: What is the *elephant* in the field? *Answer*: The field hut. From here little boys pull ropes which radiate to clappers in all parts of the clearing to scare off the wicked munias and minivets which ceaselessly raid the crops. Better views of the surrounding hills are obtained from such clearings than from anywhere else. It was surely of a scene such as this that poor N'Hkum Gam wrote from Mesopotamia: ". . . the season when the harvest is tall, and one sits at ease whistling softly in the watch-house of the clearing."

In passing, I must give the whole of N'Hkum Gam's letter. I censored hundreds of touching Kachin letters in Mesopotamia, but none more delightful than his. Out over the cruel desert, perhaps in mirage, he saw a picture of his Kachin Hills; and this is what he wrote:—

"At home it is the season when the harvest is tall, and one sits at ease whistling softly in the watch-house of the clearing. This is the month when the bird *Sing-gawng* calls, and the little scarlet minivets cry '*Byit, byit*' from the jungle's edge. Oh! and the women at sunset pick flowers to stick in their ears as they return home."

Then I think the mirage melted away, for that was all the vision he saw.

I had a dream—a vision seen
At dawn across the sand,
As if the mirage late had been
In the "Arcadian Land."

A little maid, a trembling shade,
Waving her hand to me:
A flower offering she made
Upon a shrine for me.

A forest deep, where shadows sleep:
A torrent down a glen
Whose noisy waters laugh and weep:
I hear it all again.

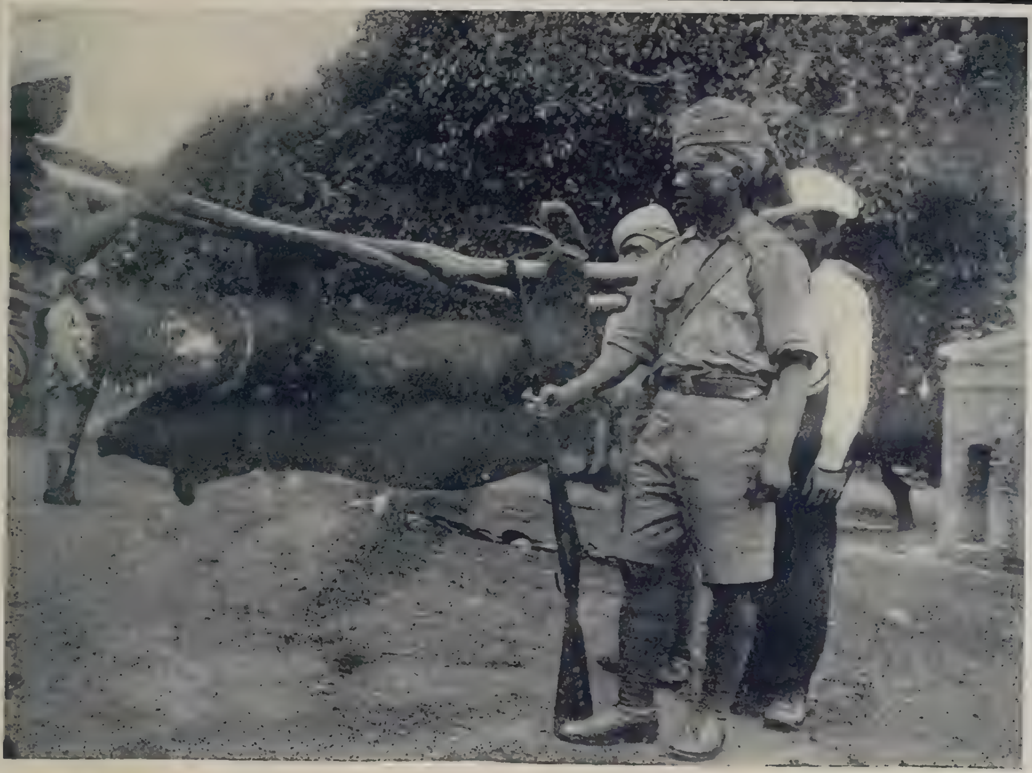
I heard a bell, a tinkling bell,
Stirred by the morning breeze,
As if a chime had tried to tell
Of shrines amidst the trees.

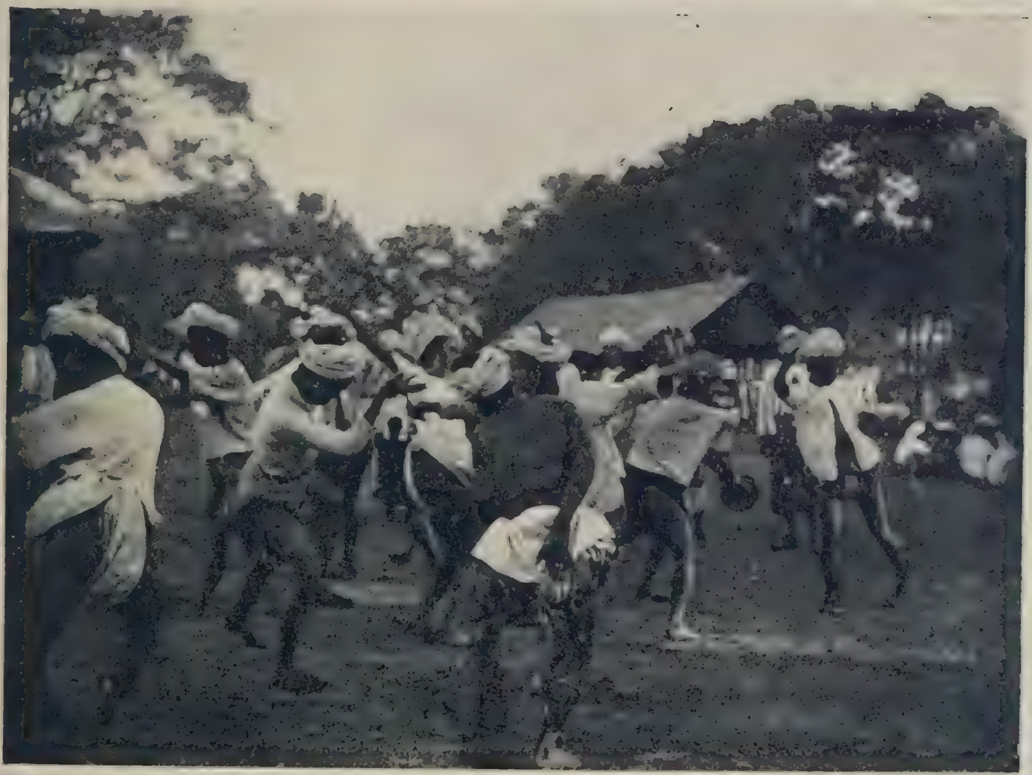
But soon the day resumed its sway
With one more scorching dawn,
And as the mirage passed away
My vision was withdrawn.

. . . .

Kachins are just as destructive as Yawyins with their *taungya* fields, but they happen to cultivate at a lower level, where the forests regenerate themselves naturally Indeed, young trees may be seen springing up amongst the crops. Seeds, like that of teak, can lie on the ground apparently for three or four years before germinating, and fire does not necessarily destroy them. The Gauris even plant out trees—especially a quick-growing mountain birch called *Maibau* (*Alnus-Nepalensis*)—with which to reforest their disused clearings. But the Yawyins live at a much higher elevation. Here rank grass and bracken spring up and prevent young trees from growing. All along the hill-tops of Kodaung, as at Bernardmyo, they have destroyed the forests, and the open, grassy slopes they leave behind prove that the destruction is permanent, or will at any rate take years to make good. Efforts have been made to coax the Yawyins to come lower down, but they will not brook interference, and in Kodaung have migrated wholesale into the Shan States rather than change their methods.

All this country is full of game. Traces of wild elephant are seen everywhere along the paths. One of our recruiters was again attacked by a wild tusker who ran him through the thigh. By some miracle the lad was not killed. Ivory is extraordinarily cheap in Kodaung, where tusks are sold for Rs.15 a *viss.*[3] A tusk as long as your arm can be bought for Rs.60. Tusks are considered appropriate gifts at the marriages of Kachin chiefs or *Duwas*, and Sau Nan, who is the





Shikar.

The Kachins are reckless hunters. They kill tigers with bows and arrows, and sometimes with only swords and clubs. They shot a tiger near the lines in Maymyo with Number 4 shot ! !

A Shan Dance.

Each race has its own peculiar dances. That of the Shans consists largely of posturing. The dance of the Lisu has many intricate and interesting steps.

eldest son of the *Duwa* of Lahtaw Hpakum, and will one day be the *Duwa* himself, was very anxious to buy a pair with which to propitiate the outraged parents of his runaway wife. The Kachins believe that elephants carry their dead and drop them into some lake where fishermen sometimes find the tusks. At one village we heard that two elephants had lately had a fight in which one was killed. The villagers and wild animals feasted on it, and the very bears came and ate its flesh.

Skins of leopards, cats and bears are constantly brought in for reward. Wild pigs are numerous, and do much damage to the crops. Bison are plentiful in the jungles of the Lower Shweli, and even rhino are found there, though they are scarce. Both bison and rhino are preserved. While I was in Kodaung a Kachin was fined Rs.120 for killing a female bison in calf. It is to be feared, however, that he had already realized quite that much money by rafting the flesh down for sale in Molo.

The Kachins display considerable pluck in tackling big game with most unsuitable weapons. I heard of a case in which a Kachin killed a wild elephant with his *dah*, by cutting off the tip of its trunk. The poor beast naturally bled or starved to death. Their adventures with tiger are so numerous as to be scarcely worth mentioning. They frequently shoot tigers with flint-lock guns, and often kill them with only *dahs*. In one place some villagers actually dispatched a tiger with clubs. Kachin soldiers in Maymyo rarely loaf about lines on holidays, but roam far and wide through the woods, sometimes shooting bears, leopards, and even tigers. One lad had a narrow escape from a bear he had wounded up a tree. Having cubs, she instantly attacked, while the Kachin, of course, had difficulty in reloading his single-barrel gun. The second shot misfired; the third burst, knocking the Kachin head-over-heels, but fortunately also killing the bear, which was then only a yard off. Naik N'Hkum Hka shot a tiger in Maymyo with "No. 4" shot!—and Lance-Naik Labya Gam killed another 8 feet 6 inches long with "slug" within a mile and a half of the lines. The skin was secured for the Kachin battalion mess.

Whenever a tiger is killed, its length is recorded by burying stones to mark where the nose and tail lay. Such measurements are often seen at the *mumshangs* or village gateways. The skull of a tiger is always buried in the middle of a path, so that all men may walk over it. Tigers' claws are worn by children as a charm against paralysis. The jaws and teeth are fastened to the slings of *dah* scabbards. The gall of bears is prized as a medicine.

Prowling in the jungles from boyhood, the Kachins have developed a love of sport, and hunting lore is almost instinctive. They know all the night sounds—this one the cry of such a bird, that a red deer, another the mussels in the stream. They revel in torchlight raids on the fish. They can turn bamboo to a thousand uses, and a Kachin connoisseur of bamboo will reject forests of it in selecting a bow or a walking-stick. They are deadly shots with a bow, and with the right hand full of pellets will keep up rapid and accurate "magazine fire," hitting a mark exactly again and again at twenty feet. I once saw my Yawyin orderly kill a woodpecker on the wing with a pellet.

Monkeys are numerous, especially the ordinary gibbon (*N'grau*), and a grey variety (*Lagang*) with a black face and long tail. A crowd of these apes visited our camp at Tun Hkung and performed the most astonishing feats, leaping down an incredible distance from one tree to another. A couple were shot for the Chinamen and Kachins. Karens, by the way, consider monkey a great delicacy. The Kachins will only shoot them with bows and arrows, believing that those shot with guns somehow turn into two. But I cannot appreciate the lust to kill, more especially in the case of monkeys, who are too horribly human in their agony. In this case the two wounded monkeys clung to each other till dispatched with sticks. If people considered the suffering added to an already pain-laden world by shooting things "for fun" they would, I am sure, indulge less lightly in killing. Personally I am quite content with mental trophies set up from my notes, and find sufficient pleasure in hunting animals and birds with field-glasses, and watching them alive in all their grace and vigour.

As may be imagined, guns are in great demand, and are really necessary to the villagers for driving off pig and deer from their crops, and tiger and leopard from their cattle. Wherever we went, Cameron was besieged with applications for licences. One very effective way in which war service has been rewarded in Kodaung is by an increase of gun permits from 300 to 500. This has been enormously appreciated.

The ascent of Mount Loi Jau[4] (6399 feet) can be easily made from the village of Pang Chyem, where we halted. The jungle on the northern slopes of the mountain is thick, but the villagers cleared a path for us to the top. The summit of the peak is long, but very narrow, and quite bare except for a carpet of knee-deep grass. The mountain falls away on the southern side in a splendid line of precipices. Indeed I felt quite giddy, and was anxious about the dogs, which would keep pouncing about in the long grass at the very edge of the cliffs. The southern face of Loi Jau is comparatively open, and where there are no precipices the mountain descends in steep grassy slopes to the Shweli far below. The views, of course, are beautiful, and more extensive than any yet seen, especially in the directions of Bhamo and Sinli. Tangde Bum, which we climbed during the Shwegu tour, is visible to the north-west. We breakfasted on the summit, and afterwards lay back on grass that supported one luxuriously. It was Burma at its very best—a perfect winter day: pale, bright sunshine to bask in; blue sky to puff smoke into; cheery Kachin lads for company. From all the valleys billows of white mist sailed upwards, and evaporated before they got anywhere.

NOTES

[1] Inset Map, Square C.

[2] *A Burmese Loneliness*, p. 64.

[3] A *viss* is about 3½ lb.

[4] Inset Map, Square C.

CHAPTER XIII

NAMHKAM—A RIVER & SOME REFLECTIONS

(*See Inset Map, Square C.*)

FROM Kodaung we re-entered Bhamo territory near Mawswi, which, together with the large village of Man Cham, is inhabited by an isolated colony of Atsis. From Mawswi we got our first view of the Namhkam plain and its surrounding mountains.

I shall not easily forget that fair panorama of uplands spreading from Bumpri Bum and Loi Law Bum, round by Sinlum and Naru Bum, and so eastwards to the wide paddy plain of Namhkam, with the Shweli flowing across it, and the mountains of Sinli and China behind. A very beautiful picture it made in the soft evening light. The Kachins call the Shweli river the *N'mau Hka,* and the plain *N'mau Pa*, or "Plain of the N'Mau." Much of the plain itself is in China. The Chino-Burmese frontier is determined by the Nam Wan and Shweli rivers which here meet.

The Kachins close down on the plain have paddy-fields there, and have fallen under Shan influence. A few are degenerate, and their servile manner is both distressing and displeasing. The truly free Kachin has always been the terror of Shans, and their contempt for Shans is expressed in a couplet:

Prang majoi nat
Hsam majoi sat ;

which means: "Thoughtlessly you fire a jungle: as thoughtlessly kill a Shan." They are inclined also to ridicule the Palaungs, whose curious babbling language, they say, shows them to be the offspring of idiots.

There is a Kachin fable which explains why the tempestuous Salween river and the placid Shweli have such very different characters. Like all Kachin fables, this one is of indefinite length, but boiled down it comes to this: Once upon a time these two rivers were friends, and agreed to sow crops on their banks. In the morning the Shweli rose early and, without rousing the Salween, set out to cultivate his valleys. When the Salween woke up later he was exceedingly angry, and rushed away through the great hills in a passion. And that is why he roars through mighty mountains to this day, with never a prosperous plain in all his long journey to break the splendid majesty of his wrath.

We descended to the Namhkam plain next day, forded a river, and walked towards Panghkam by a rather boggy path, until we came to welcome turf-land. On the way we passed Nam Hka, the home of Hpaulu La, my second Subadar in Mesopotamia. Jemadar Sau

Tu, now lately returned from Peace Celebrations in England, was back on furlough in his village at Bunglin, and I paid him a long-promised visit one day, though it cost me much sweat and a climb of eighteen miles. "Well," I said, "and what have you seen in England?"

"Ah, *Duwa*, I saw everything. I saw the King, and Glasgow, and your father. And, *Duwa*, all the Indians got their own *ghi* and became jealous of me because I asked for an ordinary British ration and ate like an elephant. I had electric lights and four blankets at Hampton Court, and I shall die of dirt and dullness in this village of mine. Look at the paths! Look at this bamboo floor!—only fit to spit through. I and Jemadar Kumje are going to build a timber house together near Bhamo."

I am afraid our adventure abroad taught the Kachins to be dissatisfied. I have often heard them speak contemptuously about their villages and even of the *Nats.* I suppose it is inevitable and in many ways regrettable. But, on the other hand, perhaps it is just as well. One would rather that than see them accept without protest the dirt and disease that mar their homes. On service they used to say: "*Duwa*, if you keep us so beastly clean we shall all die when we get home." In this they were not far wrong. A large proportion of "leave men" who go home healthy, return diseased. More venereal is contracted at home than abroad; and spleen and even goitre improve, or disappear, without treatment, away from those insanitary surroundings. They soon appreciated this. The zeal of the Kachin camp police was a ceaseless amusement, and I could hardly keep serious over their tragic and accusing wrath when they found a mess in the lines, and their determination to find a culprit at all cost, and rub his nose in it. Truly, the home-folk are in for a bad time!

I have often heard the old men grievously rebuked for their ignorance. Such presumption in the youth is sad (and also very soothing!); but in extenuation it must be inexpressibly annoying to live in Bunglin for those accustomed to be the King's guests at Hampton Court. There is one person, however, whose authority no man will defy, and that is his grandmother. I do not know the Kachin who would dare teach his *Gumgai* to suck eggs. Her amiability (no one quarrels in a Kachin village) would remain unruffled; but her weapon is a withering disbelief in anything beyond the *taungya* field in which she lost her youth and beauty.

. . . .

The plain of Namhkam is a thoroughly typical Shan plain. Its broad paddy-lands bordered with groves of bamboo, the spreading peepul-trees, the stretches of undulating turf-land, the pine-apple gardens, and behind all the encircling hills, are just what anyone familiar with these parts would expect to see. Shans muffled in towels till nine A.M., monasteries with streamers floating from tall poles; storks, magpie-robins, and blue-winged magpies, and the general inability of everyone to make themselves understood (especially in Shan) are all signs of a true Shan plain.

Panghkam and the military police post lie on open turf-land. A small market is held here every fifth day, and I was able at last to buy a set of weights shaped like lions and ducks, which, though common enough, are treated as heirlooms and are not willingly sold. The Chinese frontier is close by, following the Nam Wan river, where duck, geese and snipe are plentiful.

Namhkam, a biggish town with an important frontier trade and a famous market, is seven miles away on the other side of the Shweli. Our road was paved most of the way with blocks of stone. The little stone bridges had a distinctly Chinese appearance. All the wells are protected with stone buildings shaped like Chinese pagodas, and these picturesque little monuments are seen everywhere over the plain. Chinese buildings are visible in villages just across the border. The same influence is evident in the sweeping tile roofs of monasteries and houses in Namhkam itself. We crossed the Shweli by a ferry. A little later in the year a temporary bridge is put up for use during the winter months. The Namhkam market I thought disappointing. There was certainly a great gathering of Shans, Palaungs, Kachins and Chinese, but the crowd was neither so big nor so varied as that which collects in the market of Keng Tung.[1]

Namhkam is the headquarters of a small but widely spread Buddhist sect called *Zawti*, and a special interest attaches to it on that account. The Zawti are found in China, in the Shan States, and in Burma, notably at Shwegyin. They dispense altogether with the monastic system, and support only one single priest, who resides in Namhkam. There are novices, but no other monks, and this single priest would appear to represent in his person the law, though I could not find that he was in any sense an incarnation. In the monastery where he resides there are no images.

In Namhkam I breakfasted with Dr Harper of the American Baptist Mission. He maintains a big hospital and a school, where sixty-five Kachin boys and fifteen Kachin girls are studying. Mrs Harper teaches weaving and has a dozen good looms. In their hospitable house I again met Sara Seng Li, then editor of *Shi Laika*, a monthly Kachin newspaper. Dr Hanson, whose work here has been so remarkable, was unfortunately away on leave.

Influenza raged through the Kachin Hills in 1918. In some villages twenty per cent. of the people died, and this, even at the time of our visit, had reduced the villagers' capacity to look after their crops and re-roof their houses. Disease is rampant in these hills. In Sinlum it is spleen. In Kodaung it is goitre. And almost everywhere venereal is spreading. The men can be such fine fellows, yet how many are miserably deformed and stunted! Even little girls and boys are afflicted with goitre. Farther north it gets worse and worse, until goitre is the rule rather than the exception, and is so bad that in advanced cases the growth has to be supported in the hands. Idiots and deaf-mutes are numerous, and, to judge from their number, it would appear that the fittest members of the community are, for some reason, not the ones who survive. The saddest deformity I saw was a man who was simply head, body and feet, and no legs. His mother had had an accident at the time of his birth. This unfortunate lad was active, hard-working and intelligent, and walked about all over the hills in spite of his deformity. The fact that he begged the Civil officer to persuade the villagers to find him a wife made his case all the more pathetic. Infant mortality amongst children under five years of age is said to be seventy per cent.! Ah! the pity of it.

Many children die at birth. One or two Kachin women have been trained in midwifery, but, strangely enough, they work in Shwegu instead of amongst their own people. The chief cause of infant mortality may be traced to the fact that babies carried to the fields on their mothers' backs are exposed to fierce sun and drenching rain. Those left at home in charge of children only a little bigger than themselves frequently fall into the fire, or are subject to experiments such as being tied to the cow's tail to see what will happen. They are, of course, caked with dirt. In the Gauri Hills, at any rate, they nearly all suffer from worms, and on the whole it is really surprising that any survive at all.

The hospitals in the hills, and they are few, are mostly run by private enterprise. Certain non-medical missionaries also receive small sums for the purchase of medicines, but an ounce of worm mixture does not go far where every child requires it, and an ounce of this medicine alone now costs Rs.60! In the Bhamo Hills, which are always the first to do anything, hospitals are about to be established near Loije and in the Gauri Hills. The only practical scheme is to train Kachins to administer simple remedies, or else introduce Karens, who get on very well with Kachins. Apart from serious cases, there is a vast amount of disease of the skin and eyes requiring nothing but the application of warm water and disinfectants. The treatment of wounds, spleen, goitre and venereal requires no special skill. Indian hospital assistants sometimes learn the language, gain the people's confidence, and fill their wards. The majority are less sympathetic, and no Kachin will go near them.

We now turned north to regain civilization via Sinlum and Bhamo. We soon left the Namhkam-Bhamo trade route and struck up into the mountains to visit Naik Maji Gam's people in Maji Katawng, and congratulate them on the Distinguished Service Medal awarded to Maji Gam in Mesopotamia. The hill country is very beautiful, and now in December the cherry-trees were again in bloom. From Bum Katawng to the Namje Hka river we passed all the way through Lahtaw country, as indicated by the names of villages like *Lahtaw Wala*, *Lahtaw Hkapra* (the home of poor Sau Gam, who died of Kala Haza in Mesopotamia), and *Lahtaw Hpakum*, of which Sau Nan's father is the *Duwa*, or chief. Last time I met this *Duwa* (at the Victory Dance) he was supremely tight all the time. He has since mended his ways and turned Christian—though this did not hinder him from punishing my brandy. Poor Sau Nan, who was then still quite a keen Animist, was greatly shocked to find that his father and five other families had "chucked out"[2] the ancestral *Nats*. It seems there had been sickness. The *Nats* were unsympathetic even when a buffalo had been sacrificed to them (which the *Duwa* had eaten). So they were "kicked out," and God installed instead. The results were excellent, the sickness cured, and, well, "yes, thanks, just two fingers more."

This fickle abandonment of the *Nats* by his father was the cause of much deeper speculation by Sau Nan. "I have long thought about this, and sought the right way," he said. "Which is the right way, *Duwa*?"

"I don't know, Sau Nan," I replied. "If you are honest, brave, good and pitiful, I don't think it matters much about outward forms. Sunshine and rain fall alike on all men. It is what we *do*, not what we *believe*, that matters. The road of Christianity is a good road. You will not do wrong to follow it."

As related already, he did follow it.

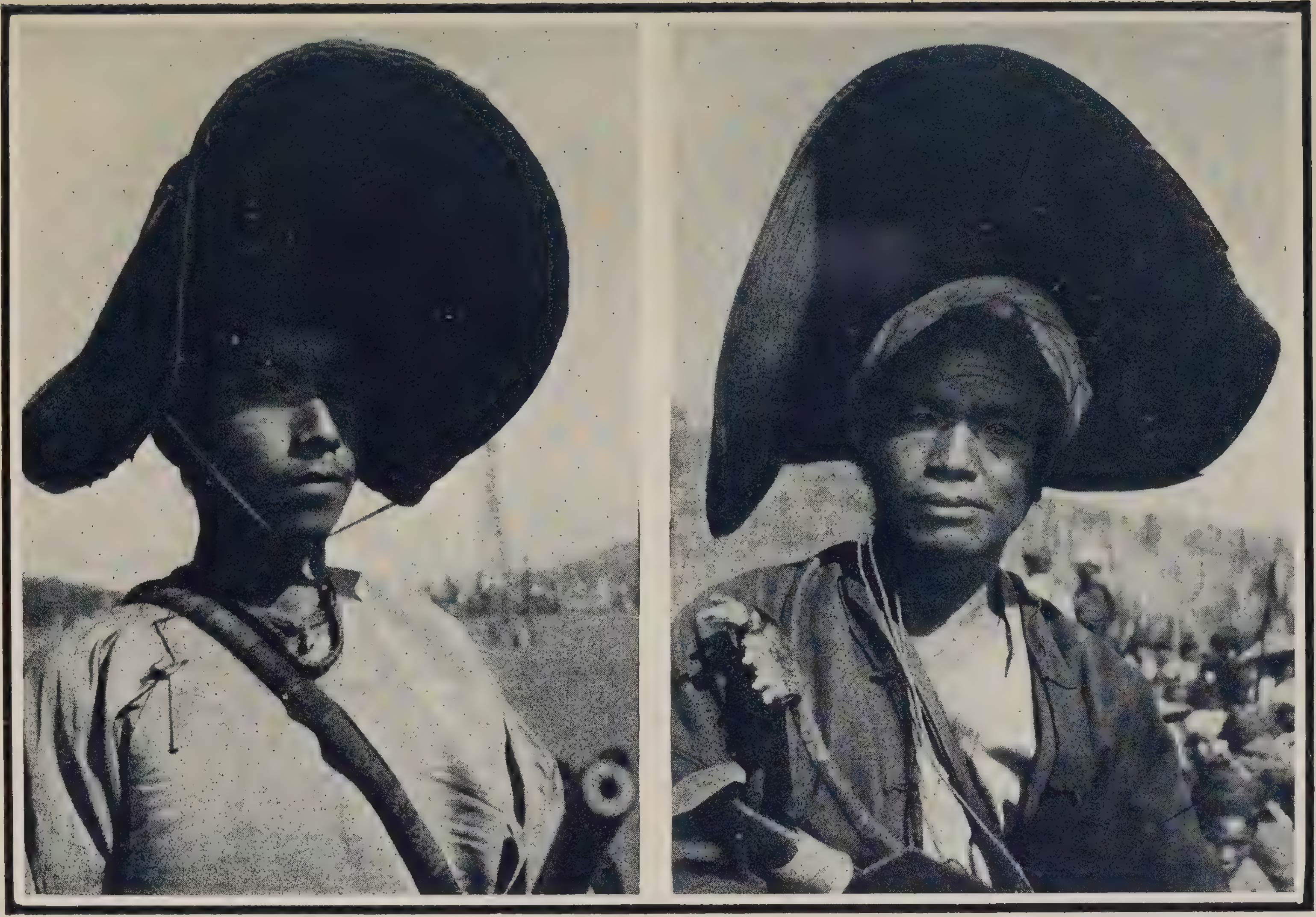
We halted two nights at Sau Nan's home in Lahtaw Hpakum to indulge his ancient grandmother, who was prepared to gaze at me for ever in speechless wonder. Kachins are very good to their wives and mothers, and treat them kindly, though the women age quickly under the hard work demanded of them in the fields. I know now that even the *Gumgais* are by no means the unloved old creatures one would suppose them to be. On the contrary, as I have explained before, they are loved by their grandchildren and looked after, and eventually mourned when the end comes of their blameless lives. The Kachins have several pleasing ways of speaking of death. They say: "He passed the world by" ("*Mungkan pun ra n na lai mat wa sai*"); or: "He lost life and melted into mist" ("*Asak sum mat salu ai da*").

I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the kindly hospitality with which Sau Nan entertained me, anticipated my wants, supplied my firewood and water, and loaded me with presents of wine. Even his grandmother, after I had driven her forth with a biscuit in each shaking hand, tottered back with a present of eggs to resume her vigil.

Several squirrels are found in the forests of Bhamo and Kodaung. The most splendid, and he really is a beauty, is one which the Kachins call *Zahkai*, and which is evidently related to *Ratufa Maxima* of Malabar. He is thirty inches long, and is therefore quite a giant. This squirrel is dark brown all over, except on the cheeks, throat, chest and the inside of the fore-legs, where he is rich creamy yellow. The tail is dark brown like the rest of the body, very bushy, and about fifteen inches long. Farther on towards Sinlum the small brown squirrel, and also a striped one, are common.

An animal frequently seen is the pine-marten, which the Kachins call *Malat*. The pine-marten is a weasel which has taken to trees, just as the otter is one which has taken to water. The head, hind-quarters, paws and tail are smoky brown. The chest is lemon-yellow, and that colour spreads over the fore-quarters until it merges into the brown parts. The English pine-marten is said to be chocolate with an orange breast, and to be twenty-two inches long. I imagine the Burmese species is considerably bigger, and I suppose has the same fierce characteristics. It is marvellously swift and active. It is shy, but I have seen it often on jungle roads, and on one occasion found myself close beside one as he lay curled on a tree-stump sunning himself. It was a pretty sight, and I had him under close observation through my glasses for several minutes.

The forests through which we had passed all the way from Kodaung are very wonderful. Their nature had changed considerably since leaving the low jungles of Momeik. We were higher up now. Loi-seng is 3500 feet, Saga Galé 4000 feet, and the summit of Mount Loi Jau is 6399 feet. Sinlum, for which we were again heading, is 5000 feet. Consequently we were in the region of trees like *Kinsa*, *Latsai* and



Children of the Hills.

Every Kachin carries a *dah*, or sword, from childhood, and turns it to every possible use. The jaws and teeth of tigers are often attached as trophies to the sling of the scabbard.

Masa. Bum Krin is notable for its *Kanyin* trees,[3] and Tun Hkung is so named (in Shan) after the splendid peepul-tree under which we camped. The jungles are full of *Shaman*, a whip-like bamboo which the Kachins store in their houses and use for divining. This bamboo is roasted over a fire till it bursts, joint by joint, and then omens are sought from the condition of its fibres. Amongst other interesting trees found at this elevation are *Hkut-rawm Hpun*, whose yellow fruit, like that of other trees already mentioned, is used as soap; and *Maru Shanam Hpun*, or cinnamon, whose bark is used as a condiment for seasoning food.

And I wish I could find space here to speak of the tits, minivets, warblers, thrushes, trogons and silver-eared mesia that frequent these hills. The golden-fronted green bulbul and the black-crested yellow bulbul are plentiful, and Swinhoe's Rufus-bellied blue chat is occasionally seen. But this is too big a subject to enter upon now. A great number of charming little birds which I saw in the Kodaung and Bhamo hills are not, I believe, found elsewhere. I have never seen them before, though I have been a careful observer. Many of them remain unidentified, and I should not be surprised if some are still unknown to science.

And the forest sounds—what haunting memories! At dawn gibbon call joyously; at dusk deer bark close by on the hill. The darkness is filled with sinister hoots: the night-jar's melancholy note, the owlet's sociable chuckle. To the Kachins the owls seem to chatter with cold, but are said to forget next day, when it is warm, to provide proper night shelter. The noontide stillness intensifies the creak of bamboo, the fall of teak leaves, the murmur of water, the swirl of swarming bees, the sough of wind tossing for a moment the still domes of foliage. Sounds float up from the villages, and the voice of a lonely lad singing to keep up his spirits. A gang of alarmed laughing-thrushes chatter excitedly. There are harsh but cheerful calls of a variety of cuckoos and barbets; and more musical notes in March when the shama, dhayl and oriole fill the woods with melody. And there are strange noises unidentified—a splash, a crack, a little crash, a distant cry. The Burmese declare the hamadryad whistles for its food. It sounds improbable; but then the tiger has an absurdly thin squeak, whereas, on the other hand, I have more than once been scared to death by the growl of a squirrel.

No less compelling are the scents—sometimes pervaded with the bloom of some one tree, sometimes mingled with the fragrance of many. The smell of fallen leaves, the pungent odour of the first rains—each recalls something: this one a riot of Bauhinia, gold-mohur, cherry or rhododendron; that one the delicious haze of pale greenery that steals over withered branches in June. There is the breath of pines upon the hill-tops, and of lemon-grass upon the mountain-sides. Lastly, there is the smell of Kachins, strong and unmistakable, recalling days of happy travel and cheery companionship.

The presiding *Nat* of these forests is a dwarf, or gnome, called *Sitnam*, a quaint, stiff-kneed little fellow with clumsy feet, who easily falls down. On meeting this pixy it is absolutely necessary to laugh before he does. If he laughs first you will come to grief; but if you are before him he runs away.

SITNAM

In forest deep if you should meet
A little chap with clumsy feet,
Be sure to laugh; for should he get
A laugh in first, you would regret.
But you will laugh the soonest if
You notice that his knees are stiff.
He is the Sprite of leaf and blade:
His dance the stir of light and shade:
The Goblin of the forest glade,
So laugh, and do not be afraid.

NOTES

[1] *A Burmese Loneliness*, chap. iii.

[2] *Kăbai kau sai.*

[3] *Dipterocarpeæ.*

CHAPTER XIV

ALAW BUM—HIGHER THAN THE HELIOS

(*See Inset Map, Square B.*)

SO much for the areas south of Bhamo. The Kachin country north of the Taping river is a narrow strip of high mountains lying along the Chinese border, partly in the Bhamo and partly in the Myitkyina districts. It is reached either from Sinlum via Tun Hong by crossing the Taping at an iron bridge, or direct from Bhamo by way of Myothit, where there is a ferry. I took this latter route on the 1st November 1920, halting that night at Hkuli, a Gauri village, whose inhabitants have lately descended from the adjacent hills. Most of the villages on the plain are, however, occupied by Shan-Tayoks, a fine, independent race. They, and the Chinese also, are of good physique, but their independence and aloofness make them difficult to approach. The Shan-Tayoks dress in a pretty scheme of light or dark blue and white, while the women also dress in shades of blue, with blue aprons and turbans. On these plains paddy was already ripening in the open fields along the Taping, and from such places we had views of Alaw Bum and the other hills into which we were about to ascend.

Myothit, whose soil is said to be richly impregnated with gold, lies at the point of exit of the Taping river from the mountains. Some quaint old buildings of Chinese design are the cotton go-downs used in the time of King Mindon. From here we climbed straight up into the hills, burrowing through dense jungle which hid the scenery. At Hkapra we joined the other road and followed a comparatively level path along the ridges to Alaw Bum. This is a lovely march. The charming views of the Bhamo plains on one side, and of the Chinese hills on the other, improve as you ascend, only to be superbly eclipsed by the panorama from Alaw Bum itself. Alpine flowers grow in masses of fragrant bloom. The last steep ascent reminded me of Htawgaw, which has about the same elevation, and is, after all, not so very far away. The white granite rock is similar. The same flowers occur, including an oleander now covered with clusters of rose-pink blossom. The deep shadows of the jungle are mysterious, and the foliage curiously varied with gigantic fronds and fern-like sprays. Then, near the mountain-top, the forest ceases altogether, and on the extreme and bare summit stands the military police fortress of Alaw Bum, at a height of 5780 feet. They say the name *Alaw Bum* is derived from the Kachin exclamation *Alaw!* and indeed the panorama that spreads below on every side is astonishing. I have seen nothing more wide, grand and supremely beautiful anywhere in Burma. Far below, the Taping and Irrawaddy lie in glistening loops across the plains of Bhamo, while from China the mountains fall gradually in long ridges to the Irrawaddy basin. In the distance lies Loilung Bum, and behind that many other ranges, of which the farthest rise perhaps beyond the Chindwin. In the opposite direction stand the quiet mountains of Yünnan. The frontier is only two or three miles away. In the south the uplands of Shwegu, the defile, Kodaung and Mogok fade into the distance; and to the north confused ranges succeed each other which we must cross on our way to Myitkyina. And all this on winter days is bathed in radiant sunshine. The cool breeze is a caress. The sky, an abyss of blue, is a mystery to stare up into as you lie on the turf. As the day advances the faint blue hills detach themselves and assert their individuality with growing clearness. Deep shadows form, throwing up sharp lines of cliff and crag. More shadows, strangely blue and limpid, gather in the ocean of tree-tops, till presently the western clouds catch the setting sun, and the whole picture is bathed in warm scarlet and purple hues. Soon night gathers in the valleys. Stars begin to appear, and night-jars call plaintively from the forests below.

Alaw Bum post was garrisoned at this time partly by Kachins, some of whom had served with me in Mesopotamia. I asked Sergeant Mitung Tang (a Yawyin) why he had returned to the military police. "I wanted the hills," he said.

"But Maymyo is the hills," I objected.

He waved an expressive hand out over the abyss—"I wanted hill-tops, *Duwa*."

I too have yearned for the serene hills of this Burmese frontier, even for the sad, wet mists that stream up in the rains from limitless gulfs below. But the winter sunshine! Who shall forget these immaculate days, which are good for man's soul!

From Alaw Bum we descended about 2500 feet to U-ra. In many places the path was obliterated by grasses which stood knee-deep. These roads are little used, and so rampant is the jungle growth that it is only worth while clearing them once in a year, December, for the "Open Season." The bridges and rest-houses are, however, kept in pretty good order.

A further descent of seven or eight miles brought us to the Mung-lai Hka, which river I presume is the border between the Bhamo and Myitkyina districts. Nalung post, of which we had distant views, is the last post of Bhamo. The main road passes through it, but was reported blocked, so we took another path closer to the frontier. I think I have never seen more dismal, unwholesome jungle. Dew lay thick in the undergrowth, soaking us as we waded through it. Where grass grew, it was often breast-high, and sometimes towered overhead, shedding showers of dewdrops. More often the jungle was too dense for grasses, and here we passed through dark lanes where sunshine never penetrates, and where the whole ground swarmed with leeches which waved us a sanguinary welcome. It was fatal to stop to pick them off. When at last we were quit of these places I pulled off about fifty leeches, of which half had "got home," and left wounds which were irritable for several days to come. Occasionally we found the way blocked with fallen trees, which the Kachins had to cut away with *dahs* to open a passage for the mules; and there were other engineering problems where the road had slipped, or mysteriously subsided into deep holes. At the end of this ruin of a road we found an excellent suspension bridge across the Mung-lai Hka. It crosses that river in a gloomy chasm where the water boils between high walls of rock. One would expect this torrent to be haunted by *Bareng*, the *Water Nat*, and such is in fact the case.

We now joined the Nalung-Nahpaw road, and though in future the bridle-paths were nothing to write home about, they were still not so bad. We reached Lawhkum We-jai early in the afternoon, and pitched camp in the village. The people were still in the fields, and the only visible inhabitants were an old woman and a boy. The old woman was sprawled forward on a sort of seat, fast asleep in the sun. Her wrinkled face was more ape-like than human, and her goitres were so enormous that we found later she could not conveniently spit over them. Her companion, the boy, was about twelve years old. He was intently chopping a bit of wood, from which he never desisted.

He was quite mad and stark naked, and we learned later that he was the sole survivor of the late *Duwa's* family. Such was our introduction to the Kachins of Sima.

The population of these hills is thin and rather confused. Since leaving Myothit we had passed communities of *Lahtaws* and *Lahtaw-Sinyus*. The inhabitants of Boi htu are *N'Hkums*, of Hkapra *Lahpai-Atsis,* and of Lazau *Marans*. In the Myitkyina section we found many *Lahtaws*, or, as they here call themselves, *Lahtawngs*. At Nahpaw there are *Lahpais*.

The villages in Sima (Myitkyina) are fairly large, but their inhabitants are maimed and dilapidated beyond description. Goitre is here at its very worst. Nothing could be more distressing or disheartening than the squalor, dirt and ignorance of these poor people. All the jovial friendliness of the Bhamo side is here absent. Instead, the Kachins are morose and suspicious. Racially they are in no way different. Their intellectual and physical inferiority is simply due to lack of development. There are no schools here, and practically no recruiting, as the local military police has largely recruited in Bhamo, instead of developing the Kachin population in its immediate vicinity. Fine youths are plentiful enough, but they are restrained and discouraged by the conservatism of their elders, who cannot bear any change from their ancestral way of life. That the Kachins we know could have emerged from such a population is almost incredible. Indeed I had some difficulty in restraining my Bhamo men from openly expressing contempt and disgust. This is not, however, a matter for contempt, but rather for profound pity. Travel, education, soap, drill and good feeding may yet work a miracle.

A scientific investigation into the causes of goitre in the Kachin Hills should prove interesting, and, I believe, instructive. It occurs in all the mountains from Kodaung to Myitkyina, but increases in extent as you advance north. And while the Kachins in the middle hills are sorely afflicted, the Shans and Chinese on the plains below, and the Yawyins on the high mountains above, escape almost entirely. We have here a variety of conditions, and so much data, that by a process of elimination it should be possible to determine the causes of this dreadful scourge. A diagram might be made to show the relation of goitre to elevation. Also the water supplies might be analysed, and the soil examined, and the relation of goitre to mica soils and to non-mica soils determined. Malnutrition, the sunlessness of valleys and consequent malaria are possible causes. There are popular beliefs that goitre is due to mica, to hill-water, to snow-water, or to heart-strain amongst hill-people. Here there is certainly mica where goitre is worst, but no snow-water. The Yawyins of the extreme mountain-tops, who should suffer most from heart-strain, are in fact freest from goitre; but if it is the water, how is it contaminated in its descent from the Yawyins to the Kachins? The Yawyins reside 2000 feet above the Kachins, in a fine climate, but after all Kachins at 4000 and 5000 feet live at no mean altitude. Lastly, it would be useful to discover the extent to which goitre is hereditary, what its relation is to madness or weak-mindedness, and whether, as is claimed, it can be cured or arrested in early stages by painting with iodine. From the recruiting point of view, as well as for social reasons, this is a question of very great importance.

The suggestion of Mr Wilson, Assistant Superintendent of Sadon, that goitre amongst Kachins is due to inbreeding is, I consider, of great interest. It may explain the apparent relation between goitre, and madness and deformity. It may also account for the immunity from goitre of the Yawyins, who, though they live amongst the Kachins, rarely intermarry with them. The Kachin marriage system, whereby one clan seeks brides from another, would seem to ensure the introduction of new blood. A family, however, often limits its alliance to certain particular houses within the prescribed marriage tribe. Hence, however distant those houses may be geographically, it will be found that cousins, perhaps first cousins, are marrying for several successive generations. This fact no doubt accounts for much of the prevalent disease and idiotcy. The old rigid marriage system is now, fortunately, relaxed, except in the case of *Duwas*, who in consequence have lost that physical and intellectual pre-eminence from which formerly they derived power and social distinction. Further, it has been noticed that *Gams*, or eldest sons, are occasionally of inferior physique to their younger brothers because they are born of immature parents. Parenthood at an immature age has certainly an important bearing on the physique of a section of the Kachin community.

The Yawyins are far more moral than the Kachins. Sexual relations at an immature age are not common. Their marriage customs allow more latitude for choice. There is no circular system like the *mâyu dama* of the Kachins, and apparently a Yawyin may marry into any clan outside his own.

Colonel Barron, I.M.S., to whom I showed my notes, thinks that goitre is not hereditary, and that the disease is due to an actual micro-organism. Amongst Kachins he believes it results from insanitary conditions. To test this, twelve slightly goitrous recruits were enlisted and measured. No treatment whatever was given. Presumably as the result of clean surroundings, two cases showed a decrease of one and a half inches after three months; six cases decreased by one inch, and the remainder showed slighter, but marked, improvement.

. . . .

In one of these Lahtaw villages we found a bamboo pole with fragments of a wasps' nest tied to it. This was not a *Nat* offering, as I supposed, but merely a trophy of a large wasps' nest lately taken. A bamboo model of the nest was also hung up to show its size. The Kachins take wasps' nests for the sake of the larvæ, which are considered a delicacy.

The wonderful bird life which occurs in the southern Kachin Hills was not seen at all throughout this long journey. The season, weather and elevation were favourable. I cannot account for this almost complete absence of all but the commonest birds north of the Taping river. The red-headed trogon is plentiful in the deep forests near Hkapra; but the forktails, so numerous in the Sinlum Hills, were not met at all here. We saw a good many flying squirrels, which the Kachins call *Yu-byi*. They say it is a cunning fellow, for when the birds collect taxes it pretends to be a rat, and when the rats collect taxes it pretends to be a bird. A foolish little legend, but it shows that these people have imagination.

One of their most delightful fancies is with regard to the Milky Way, which they call *Lămu Shingna*. They say there was once a boy and girl, desperately in love, who could never meet. They died simultaneously, and the smoke of their funeral pyres, rising and mingling, now forms the white mists of heaven.

Another lovely panorama awaited us at Nahpaw, which we reached on the 7th November. Nahpaw is the usual stout fort perched on a bare hill-top. Its elevation is 5400 feet. Sima post is visible to the north, its helios winking in the sunshine across the intervening ridges. We looked down once more over the low hills and plains of Upper Burma which we had now seen from so many points of view. Behind the post (to the east) rise the high mountains of Pajau, whose bare summits suggest Yawyins—who, in fact, occur there. Pajau, which is 7500 feet, occupies a salient in the frontier, and belongs to a system of lofty uplands. Nlung Praw Bum (White Stone Peak) in China is 7600 feet. Four or five peaks to the south of it are over 8500 feet. The main range (here in China) becomes the frontier a little farther north, where, opposite Sadon, it rises to 11,000 feet, and opposite Htawgaw to 12,800 feet.

We ascended to Pajau to redeem a promise made long ago to visit Sergeant Labya Tang in his Yawyin home. There is a stiff climb of 2000 feet through forests from Nahpaw to the open, sunlit hill-tops, which I suppose are about 7500 feet. The rounded summits are covered with a thick crop of dwarf bamboo, called *Kading*, which is only three feet high, but is effective here, as bracken is elsewhere, in preventing afforestation.

Below us spread the usual superb landscape, only we looked down upon it now from a greater height. Nahpaw and Nalung lay far beneath us, with the low hills beyond still interleaved with banks of morning fog. Beyond Myitkyina rose Gwi Marit Bum and other mountains of Mogaung. How splendid are these winter days on the roof of Burma! Each hour has its enchantment. They are uplifting days when the sunshine glitters, and the shadows are strangely deep and blue. The air is wine. You may climb all day joyously, devour tremendous meals, puff cigar smoke into an immaculate sky, and lying back on the turf or bracken recall similar days at Hkringmu-dan, Bernardmyo, Mount Victoria, Loi Jau or Mount Popa.

Here time is eternally changeless. Below, the twentieth century is fretting itself in frowsy offices. People are travelling first-class to-day on the Myitkyina line, and breakfasting at Naba or Thazi. God help their poor insides! But the twentieth century cannot enter this sanctuary. Even the restless helios cannot lift it so high.

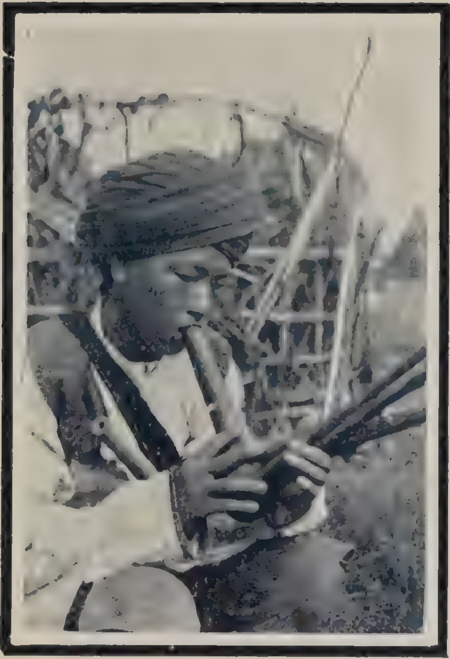
From these uplands we descended gently to Pajau, a Yawyin village of forty houses, situated in a high and narrow valley. The rest-house is a rustic cottage with white walls and thatch roof, a garden of roses, and a porch overgrown with ramblers. It is all very unexpected—the labour of a Gurkha *darwan*, who is evidently a man with a soul. Would that there were others! It is surprising how invariably house-builders and road-makers in Burma neglect the scenery. You see, there is no allotment for sentiment in the estimates.

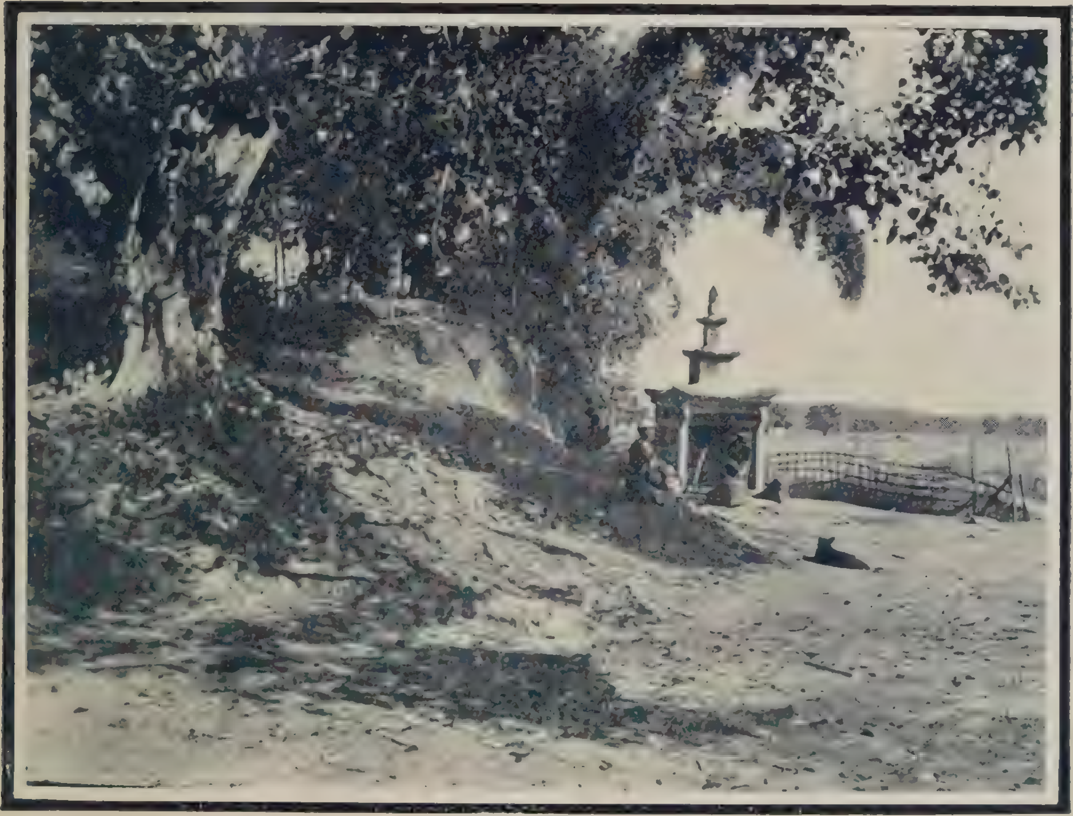
The hills about this dear little house are wonderfully restful. For two enchanted days I basked in the garden until, at four o'clock, the sun deserted our side of the valley, leaving the air at once chill. There is something very cosy about tea after sunset, with chestnuts roasting by the fire.

Pajau is rather bigger than most Yawyin villages, but possesses the ordinary characteristics. The houses are raised as usual on stone plinths, and the women wear the usual charming costume. In this case the men's dress is distinctive—a scheme of white and blue. Some wear a short white coat and gaiters, with blue turban, belt and shorts. Others wear a long white coat reaching to the knee with blue epaulets and a blue belt, often embroidered. The Yawyins here cultivate hemp, with which they weave stout cloth and blankets. No doubt they grow poppies too in secret folds of the ground where no one is likely to see them.

Labya Tang welcomed me delightfully, and introduced his father and brothers. In the house were also some Chinamen, utter strangers, who had sought and received shelter as a matter of course. We have something to learn of hospitality and kindness from these simple hill-folk.

I was much impressed with the physique of these Yawyins, the abundance of lusty youths, and the healthiness of the children, as compared with the sickly creatures in the Kachin villages below. Goitre is entirely absent. These Yawyins seemed much cleaner than the Kachins. Their clothing, though white, was little soiled, and even the old women—Labya Tang's homely old mother, for instance—were quite delightful. This cleanliness is partly due to the fact that the houses are small and airy. The floor being solid, you cannot spit through it; neither can pigs wallow beneath it.





Yawyin.

The Yawyin represent the Lolo migration down the Salween, and are first cousins to the Muhso.

A Shan Plain.

Amidst the hills are frequent low plains, inhabited by Shans. On the Namhkam Plain all the wells are protected by little Chinese pagodas, built of stone.

Lastly, the jungle has been utterly destroyed for miles round, which, though it grieves Government to tears, is undoubtedly healthy. For all these reasons, infant mortality is low. Two fathers said they had fifteen grown-up children between them, and had lost only two babies. This appears to be the rule. Out of seventeen Kachin children, at most five or six would survive. The Yawyins attach importance to having children. One lad told me he would enlist as soon as he had two more sons. I implored him to hurry up.

The Yawyins do not share with the Kachins their passion for gongs. They prefer to buy ponies and cattle, which they say "breed." They are well-to-do, and thrifty even to the extent of being close with money. They cannot be said to enlist freely, but the wonder is that they do so at all. If I were happily a Yawyin, I certainly should see the D.R.O. damned first. It is astonishing that these children of the peaks could have endured two stifling years of fierce heat on the Tigris plains, and distinguished themselves there.

Before I left, we held a meeting which ended with dancing. Yawyins, both men and women, dance in long lines to the soft and rhythmic music of a pipe. The steps are very curious and pleasing to watch. The pipe is a gourd, with tubes stuck into it, and is rather suggestive of a Scottish bagpipe. It differs, however, in this, that it produces music.

From Pajau we descended to Sima, which is also known as Fort Morton, after Major Morton, who was killed there in 1893 in action against Kachins. This is the headquarters of Mr O. W. Terndrup, who treated me with the utmost kindness and hospitality. Sima is a pretty spot—the usual lone hill, with a fort on the top of it, and lovely views all round. From the "Circular Road" some falls, called *Gumlau Hka* (Rebellious Waters), are seen. They descend in three cascades, of which the lowest is half hidden in a smother of spray. The falls are some way off across the valley, and in fact over the border, but their roar is plainly audible.

I had hoped here to meet my beloved Chinese servant, Chau Sheh Chwen,[1] for whom I had secured the appointment of Post Interpreter at Sima when I went on service. I was truly grieved to hear he had died in Tengyueh some months earlier.

During my stay one of the Sima elders seized the entire live-stock of a neighbour who had hinted that he had the Evil Eye. This apparently frivolous remark is in fact one of the most damaging that can be made. The insinuation is easily believed, and then the victim of it, no matter what his standing, is ruined. I knew a headman who had to be removed for having the Evil Eye.[2] One of our *Havildars*, a good fellow who has risen by sheer ability, is an outcast at home, whom no girl will marry, on account of some such malicious remark. When Sau Nan annoyed people by running away with Ja Doi, this weapon was immediately resorted to by certain persons, who were, however, "choked off."

Four more easy marches brought us on the 15th November (1920) to Myitkyina, the hub of a new system of hills described already in *A Burmese Enchantment.* The distance from Bhamo to Myitkyina by the frontier route we have taken is about one hundred and fifty-two miles.

NOTES

[1] See *A Burmese Enchantment*, pp. 141 and 177; and *A Burmese Loneliness*, pp. 187 and 188.

[2] *A Burmese Loneliness*, p. 101.

CHAPTER XV

SADON—THE WORLD OF THE WILSONS

(See Map, Square D. H., and Inset Map, Square A.)

LET us skip six weeks, and return again to Myitkyina in January (1921) in order to visit Sadon. January is a slack season between harvest and jungle-burning, when the villagers are at leisure. At the end of the month they begin to rethatch their houses, a form of employment which keeps them at home all day. The time is therefore particularly favourable for studying the people. The weather is still dry, cold and bright. After the usual ghastly railway journey we go straight on board the launch *Pathfinder* in the dusk. The quiet frontier hills, the still, jade-green surface of the Irrawaddy, are infinitely soothing; and presently stars and a young crescent moon, sparkling in the cold night air, are reflected upon the water.

The *Pathfinder* crosses at dawn to Waingmaw, where eight mules and two cheery Chinese muleteers are waiting. They seem like old friends, and smile as if they were. We exhaust my stock sentences of Chinese, and I push off without exposing my abysmal ignorance. The word Waingmaw is probably a

Burmese corruption of the Shan *Vying Mao* (New Town). Wausawng is eleven miles distant. It is also the first stage of the journey to Htawgaw and Hpimaw and is full of memories of *A Burmese Enchantment.* But now a new bungalow occupies a knoll beside the wire suspension bridge at Wausawng. A clear forest stream murmurs over the pebbles below. Stone seats and a stone table command the view—an unusual lapse from the straight path of materialism, for which the P.W.D. is not often to be commended. Chinese porters in blue, with huge bamboo hats, cross the bridge, and are vastly amused at being scrutinized through glasses. They laugh; and I say, "*Hau ne! Hau ne! Kur naneh kur?*" and discreetly dry up. Sometimes a caravan passes; and sometimes parties of Shans, Atsis, Marus or Kachins, the latter wearing the true square-ended northern *dah* in an open scabbard. Sometimes, also, they carry a spear. All these are sturdy, cheery people, amongst whom it is a pleasure to travel.

The country is still flat and densely wooded. The jungles flash with the green and blue of parrots and rollers. A brilliant kingfisher takes his stand on a rock below the bungalow. A pied kingfisher hurries past, but his beat is farther up-stream. A bank, deeply screened and shaded with creepers, is the haunt of a furtive Burmese whistling-thrush and of several immaculate forktails; and across the stream a white-capped redstart flaunts along the bank. This is a comparatively rare little bird—black, with a vivid white cap, and rich chestnut rump and tail. The grey-headed flycatcher is plentiful. Evidently this tour is going to be exciting from the ornithological point of view.

From Bum Katawng, the next bungalow, the two peaks of Lai-ngu Bum are seen to great advantage—the one a cone, the other a hump—an imposing stretch of bold upland. We are already well up into the foot-hills. The white-eyed grey monkey is plentiful, and on nearing Hpung Kan on the following morning we saw black gibbon whose passage through the trees was almost a flight as they sailed from branch to branch, just as acrobats float from one trapeze to another. Sometimes these apes took a branch with their hind feet, thus completing a somersault in their retreat. The presence of apes and monkeys so near the road was due to the ripening of berries on certain trees. The cherry, now in blossom, also attracted the exquisite *Chloropsis Hardwickii* (a brilliant green bird with black throat and orange belly), which usually keeps to the higher tree-tops. At Sadon itself the Chinese magpie occurs, and farther on, as at Wawchon, it collects in flocks of twenty or more. The Eastern blue rock-thrush, which in winter haunts the chimney of every house elsewhere, is, however, conspicuously absent. From the evidence of Mrs Wilson it appears that these birds arrive in July and stay throughout the rains till November. It would therefore seem that Sima and Sadon, owing to their height, are within the area to which they migrate on leaving the rest of Burma after their winter residence, or perhaps their southern migration is arrested there for a while on their return.

Sadon is the kingdom of Mr T. F. Wilson, who has ruled it as Assistant Superintendent for thirteen years. His kindness and hospitality, and his deep knowledge of the strange people with whom he deals, have won him a very special position. Like Scott, he is an acknowledged authority on Kachin affairs, and he has given the Kachin military venture his earnest support. Both he and Mrs Wilson seem to know every villager individually. My pleasantest duty in Sadon was to entertain Mrs Wilson and her four charming little daughters to tea. These four little girls, now excitedly awaiting impending adventures in Europe, reminded me of shy, eager fledglings about to leave their nest.

Sadon has an elevation of 4600 feet. The fort (Fort Harrison) occupies a bare hill-top, and commands a splendid view all round, especially to the east across the valley to high mountains culminating in Tabu Bum (11,000 feet). It is a wonderful panorama, serene and calm, and endowed with an ever-changing beauty as the shadows move across the uplands from dawn to dusk. The Chinese frontier follows the lofty sky-line.

Sadon is essentially the home of Atsis and Lashis. Indeed I met no Kachins at all to the east of it.

Along the Htawgaw road Marus are found as far as Lauhkawng, and beyond that the inhabitants of Htawgaw and Hpimaw are almost entirely Lashis. The confused population of Sadon, though mainly Atsi, Lashi and Maru, includes also Yawyins, Chinese and Shan Tayoks, besides a variety of Kachins such as Marips, N'Hkums, Shadan-Lahpais, Karengs or Udi, and other obscure families like Nangs, Layangs and Chang-majas, whose distribution is uncertain.

Sadon itself, Wawchon and Lahpai are the three most important Atsi-Lahpai villages. It seems certain that this country was originally occupied by Palaungs who have now been pushed south to the left bank of the Shweli, where we have already met them. The present Lashi and Maru inhabitants appear to have come in, some nine generations ago, from the Ngawchaung Valley of Htawgaw. The similarity between the sound of Ngaw-chaung and the village of Wawchon is significant; and there are other places in the two areas with similar names.

Sadon is now also the home of one of the most important Yawyin communities in Burma. There are about twenty villages of them. Many have grown up in comparatively recent years.

The Lashis here are well spoken of, and are certainly of fine physique. They do not yet recruit freely, but merely require encouraging and teaching. In a few days we got fifteen lads. The people as a whole are shy and extremely ignorant, and until a school was started in 1921, under a Yawyin instructor, no education whatever was attempted. I am of opinion that in time Sadon will develop into an important recruiting area like Sinlum. The people are cheery, and one meets with none of the surly suspicion so remarkable in Sima.

The Kachin language is by no means universally spoken in these hills. Few Lashis seem to use it. There is, in fact, a confusion of speech. The various Yawyin settlements often speak dialects of their own. Three distinct patois of Maru exist in the Sadon charge.

One expedition took us into the heart of the high mountains to the east of Sadon, to the village of Bum-tum Yawyin. Needless to say, the Yawyins here, as elsewhere, live in an upper world of their own. Crossing the intervening valley, we toiled up the opposite slopes by rough paths that are seldom used. Mountain birch (*Yang-bau*) is plentiful, and adds greatly to the beauty of the scenery. The villagers plant it systematically over their old *taungyas*, and use the timber later for planks and rafters. Presently we passed an Atsi village. A still farther climb brought us to the Yawyins at Bum-tum. The mountains are splendid. They are cleared in parts in the mysterious way that Yawyins alone can clear; but whole peaks and spurs are yet clothed in virgin jungle, where, they say, bears are plentiful. The scenery, of course, is noble. From the hill above our camp we had a magnificent view right across the Triangle to the far mountains beyond. But, as ill luck would have it, it rained, and we had only a wretched little tent. It turned bitterly cold—and indeed I never got warm again till I left Sadon, except for a few perspiring intervals. The brute who built the rest-houses in these hills forgot fire-places in all, and I only hope his particular hell will be an Arctic one.

Bum-tum is probably 8000 feet. The place is disappointing, and consists of only seven houses tucked into a fold of the mountain. Near the village we saw a tiny hut in which a hunter hides himself. A narrow lane is cut in the bracken to where some salt is laid on the ground to which deer are attracted. The Yawyins of Bum-tum are of the clan called *Waw Hpa* (descending tone). They raise pigs, fowls, ponies and a great number of sturdy goats.

As we travelled we held meetings in any village where an audience was obtainable. The people, however, turned out or not as they felt inclined, without reference to the summons of the *Salangs*. They are, of course, intensely democratic, and are sceptical both with regard to the munificence of a soldier's pay, and about the integrity of the D.D.O. However, by this time there only remained thirty vacancies in the Kachin Rifles, and we could afford to meet defeats with equanimity. The area, as I have said, is one of the most promising.

Lance-Naik Sau Yaw's linguistic abilities were of special value to me on this tour. His earnest speech carried weight, and his droll remarks created just the right good humour. The success of Kachin recruiting is largely due to Sau Yaw, who accompanied me on all my expeditions. He is one of those energetic, amusing, yet unassuming characters who inspire others with their own zeal and cheerfulness. "I feel my own size up here," he told me one day. "In Mandalay I am only as big as my finger. In a solitude everyone is important. A crowd is a herd of small people."

There is a good deal of truth in Sau Yaw's philosophy. In the frontier hills men are faced with nature and its realities. The fretful little shams and conventions of civilization are infinitely puny when looked down upon from the mountain-tops.

. . . .

The main mule route from Myitkyina and Sadon to Tengyueh in Yünnan passes through Lukyi and Wawchon, and crosses the frontier by the Kambai-ti Pass. A good many muleteers use this road, and we also met Chinese porters bringing in eggs, pigs, fruit and walnuts. I was fortunate in having Wilson as my travelling companion on this second tour. Crossing the little paddy plain of Sadon Pa, we climbed again into the farther hills, and slept at Lukyi. The hills were very beautiful, with scarlet *Maga* blossom flaming in the jungle. Here again birch is plentiful. Nowhere else have I seen such successful afforestation. Most of the *taungya* in Sadon is done by Marus and Kachins, but both Lashis and Atsis use terrace cultivation extensively.

At Wawchon Wilson has built a snug little house of solid stone—a safe refuge from a rain-storm which came racing, black and threatening, over the hills just as we arrived. We were, however, lucky to get twenty-four hours' rain safely over during a period scheduled for halt. When at last the clouds passed away we found the hill-tops powdered with snow. That evening a large snake, apparently a viper, entered the house, no doubt to escape the cold. Luckily the whining of one of the dogs called our attention to it.

The hamadryad occurs here, and I met people in Sima, Bhamo and the Gauri country who have personally been attacked by them. In Sadon the clouded leopard is fairly common—a beautiful beast with a coat marked like grey variegated marble. At Wawchon I saw a splendid pine-marten on the road.

The birds of Sadon are a study in themselves. Numbers of tits and small babblers, apparently of several different kinds, travel together in large flocks. Some are extremely small, and the flock moves furtively through the foliage like shadows. I had not time to identify them. Near Bum Katawng I obtained specimens (male and female) of the exquisite Dabry's scarlet sun-bird which had been caught with lime, and which two little fiends were wearing alive in their button-holes. Kachin boys often decorate themselves thus with live birds. The victims are usually bulbuls. The male of Dabry's sun-bird is iridescent blue and lilac on the crown, nape and throat, crimson on the back and shoulders, and scarlet on the breast. The belly and rump are yellow. The female is olive on head, neck and throat, with touches of shining blue, and stains of red. The breast is scarlet, and the belly and rump yellow, as in the male, but a little less brilliant. The tongues of these tiny birds, which live on honey, are hardly thicker than a butterfly's proboscis.

The road to the Kambai-ti Pass can be seen fourteen miles away zigzagging up to the Chinese frontier. There are said to be pines on the top. Wilson went up to visit boundary pillars, and was walking for some miles in snow. Unfortunately I could not go with him as I had to visit the neighbouring villages of Luhtawng and Singai. These expeditions were, however, delightful. The weather was utterly gorgeous after the rain. It was a pleasure to sit basking in the sun with a coat on. The atmosphere was brilliant, and the hills were washed with fresh and lovely colours. On the distant peaks beyond the Triangle, and also close above us on the uplands of Kau Lyang Bum, new snow lay glistening in the sunshine.

CHAPTER XVI

MYITKYINA—WHERE THE WORLD IS YOUNG

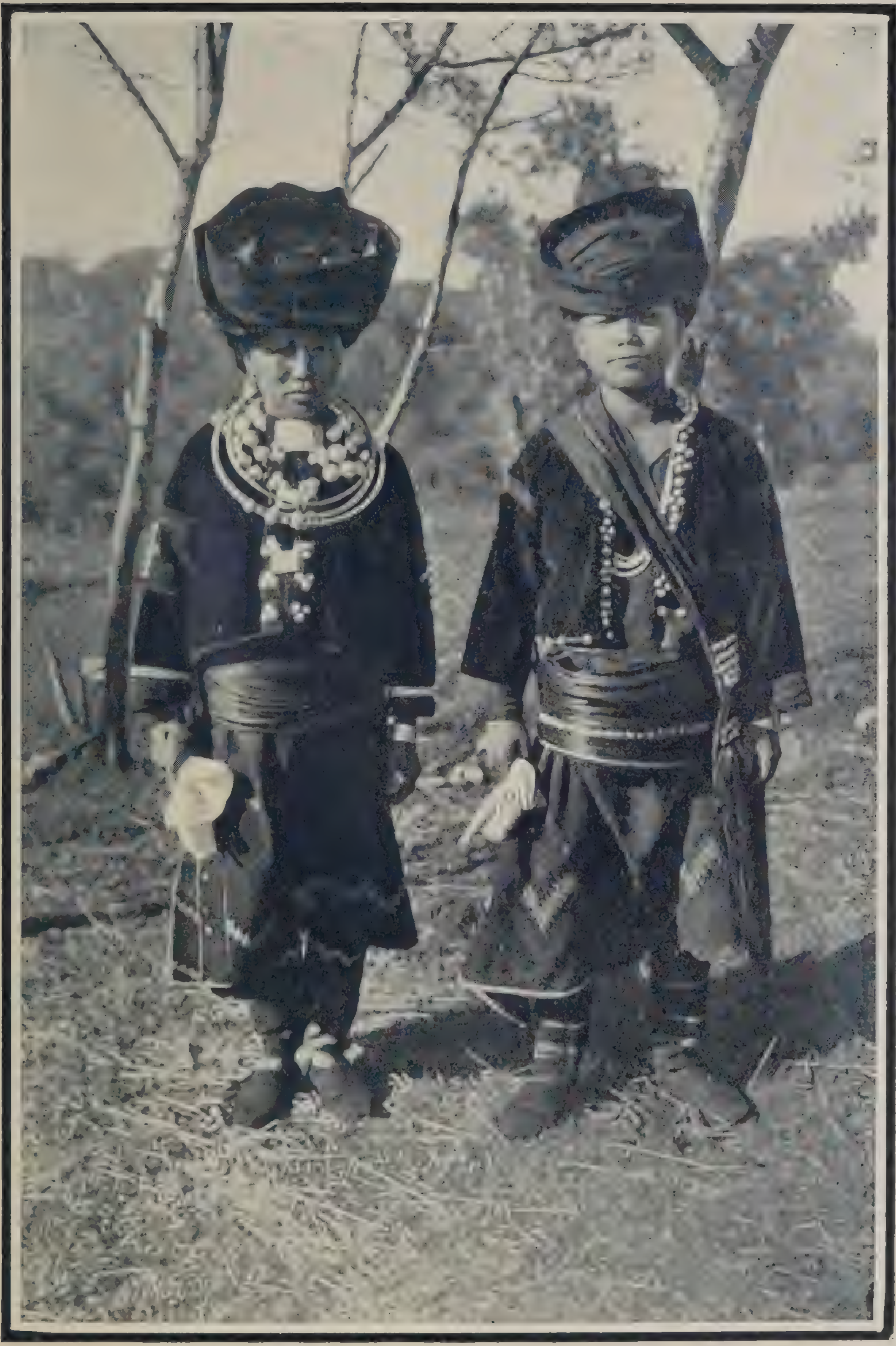
THE plains of Myitkyina are peopled with a strange assortment of races. Burmese are not numerous—and, indeed, this was never Burmese country. The population is largely Shan, Shan Gyi, Shan Galé, Shan-Burman and Shan-Chinese, some of whom are pure Shan, and others, as their names show, of mixed descent. Some speak the Shan language, and some have abandoned it. Then, of course, there are Kachins, Atsis, Marus, Lashis and even Yawyins from the hills, Chinese from Yünnan, and Kadus from Upper Chindwin. There are Nungs from Hkamti, and round Mogaung a colony of Assamese, while the Irrawaddy defile is the home of a strange people called Hpöns, or Hpoans, of whom we shall speak later. Lastly, there are Gurkhas, who have come to stay—sturdy, desirable folk whose Mongolian origin renders them particularly suitable as settlers in Burma.

The Myitkyina district is an enormous area, including Sima, Sadon, Htawgaw, Mogaung, Kamaing and Myitkyina Central. This last, the country close round Myitkyina, is divided into Watau Gyi on the west bank of the Irrawaddy, Măra on the east bank, and Sinbo down-stream astride the Upper Defile. All these are Kachin areas.

In January Myitkyina is at its best—cold and bracing, with a touch of snow on the farthest hills. At Mankin we saw a reach of ultramarine Irrawaddy under a sky almost as blue. At Alam bungalow the Gurkha *Darwan* had a dear little son eighteen months old. The wife and mother had lately run away, leaving this pathetic couple to comfort each other. Their affection was touching, especially in the tiny boy, who expressed his confidence with a charming naughtiness. At Ching Krang I spent the day with Mr A. Samuel, the Assistant Superintendent, who gave me much valuable help. Many *Duwas* and *Agis* were paying in revenue, which gave me an opportunity of meeting them. Next morning from Tang Pe village, where we stopped to lunch, we had a fine view of the confluence of the N'Mai and Mali Hka rivers, which here combine amidst a mass of rocks to form the Irrawaddy. The beautiful upland country between these two rivers is the famous unadministered tract known as the Triangle.

The Kachins of the Triangle claim a residence in that area of over forty generations. We have seen in Chapter I. (p. 18) that, according to legend, the Kachins came originally from the land of *Majoi Shingra Bum*, and that that ancient home is believed to have been in South-Western China. We have seen that the primeval migration was arrested half-way for centuries, probably by a Shan barrier across its path—those Shans whose broken descendants are still found right across Burma from Myitkyina to Upper Chindwin and Assam. I am inclined to think that that half-way halt of the Kachins occurred in the Triangle of the N'Mai and Mali Hka rivers, or that the Triangle was at any rate the southern part of the area then occupied by them. This is the more probable because the Triangle is the last place they could have entered without butting into the Shans, and because to the north of it there are no considerable plains (except Hkamti) suitable for Shan occupation. We are also supported in this theory by tradition, though unfortunately that is not very reliable. Still, it is significant that "Triangle Kachins" claim a residence of over forty generations, while those of Sadon claim nine, the Gauris seven, the Kodaung Kachins four or five, and those of Kut Kai three or less. In these last areas the pagodas and village names of former inhabitants (Palaungs), and the number of Kachin tombs, support the Kachin tradition of a recent arrival. It would seem, then, that the Triangle is the country from which Kachin areas now to the south of it have been gradually stocked.

In almost all unadministered tracts throughout Burma the feeling towards us is friendly, and the people are not averse to the idea of being taken over. This is especially the case where the authority and dignity of the *Duwas*, or chiefs, in our own territory



KACHIN WOMEN IN FULL DRESS.

The costumes of two Kachin women is here shown. Certain sections of Yawyins are called "flowery Yawyins," because the dress of their women is so pretty.

has been wisely preserved. The unadministered Chins took no part in the late Chin rising; the Hukong is perfectly safe for survey parties, and in the Triangle the *Duwas* are related to *Duwas* in administered country, and can be approached through them. Even extraditions are effected with little difficulty.

In the Triangle, in Hkamti, which was taken over in 1914, and in Sana, which we have only occupied since 1915, slavery is, or has been, extensive. However, some misapprehension exists about it. Slaves are usually kidnapped as children and sold to their owners, who work them hard, but treat them kindly. Their children are also slaves, but they are not sold away, and this bondage has none of the horrors of ordinary slavery. Slaves, in fact, are often quite happy, and sometimes marry into their owners' families. No moral stigma whatever appears to attach to them, and this is a very important point corroborated by many experienced frontier officers. There seems to be no reason in the world why ex-slaves should not be recruited for the army, since their social position after release is unimpaired. As soon as unadministered territory is taken over, the slaves, if they so desire, can buy their freedom. Government lends them Rs.35, or whatever it is, for the purpose. A slave is not worth more than a few pigs after all, and the owner is usually quite happy to sell out. There are, of course, runaway slaves; and prosecutions for selling or pawning children into unadministered territory, or across the Chinese border, are by no means rare.

On the road we met several Yawyin immigrants from China. Some arrive destitute, and a crowd of Yawyins in a state of starvation recently flung themselves into Myitkyina hospital in desperation. They were given land and three hundred baskets of rice to set themselves up with. Usually migration is much more deliberate, and advance parties are sent on ahead. Chinese rule appears to be very irksome to the hill-folk just now. They complain of fighting and high taxes—and, indeed, we heard that a house tax in Yünnan was levied at Rs.24 as compared with Rs.2-8 over here, and that there was a sort of agricultural tax of Rs.8 a year on every *mamuti*, or spade. (The only legal tax in Yünnan is the land tax.)

N'Sop Zup is forty-three miles, or four stages, north of Myitkyina along the Putao road. I first visited it in 1914, when Putao was taken over.[1] There was then only a jungle-path. Things have greatly changed since. Putao is now a going concern, and there is a good unmetalled road, with bridges, and comfortable rest-houses at each stage. At N'Sop the jungle has been cleared, and a neat little post commands a splendid view of the Mali Hka. The stately beauty of this river held me all the evening as shadows crept down the mountains of its narrow valley. Its bed is full of reefs, and its deep, jade-green waters, disturbed here and there with boiling eddies, suggest the tumult of the rapids above and below. The opposite bank is clothed in impenetrable jungle from which troops of monkeys came down and played on the sand, while now and then the shadowy forms of great fish could be seen in the water.

We left the Putao road for good near the sixty-first mile, and struck up west into the mountains by the usual heart-breaking paths. This tour of one hundred and seventy-seven miles makes on the map a U, with Myitkyina and Mogaung at the two points. There were, of course, no more comfortable rest-houses, but this had its advantages as well as its drawbacks. It is troublesome to be stared at and spat round, and there is an awful monotony in expounding the same truths, making the same jokes, and meeting the same defeats for twenty consecutive days; but, on the other hand, there is a far closer intimacy with the villagers round the camp-fire, which has its pleasures and compensations. The rest-house, whatever its comforts, has been a serious factor in isolating us from the people. A special insight belonged to the days when officers travelled slowly, slept in huts and *zayats*, or sought the hospitality of village monasteries.

At Shadan Bum we were rewarded with a lovely view over a sea of low hills and endless, endless forests, spreading to the foot of a high range to the west called Hku-mung Bum. These mountains rise to over 8000 feet, and divide this Sana country from Kamaing and the mysterious Hukong. There are said to be rhino in the foot-hills. Hku-mung Bum is half veiled in clouds all day, but in the evening stands out sharply against the sunset, a barrier of fine peaks spread across the landscape.

All this is Kachin country. Shadan Bum and the villages for many marches are inhabited exclusively by Lahtaws. The people are not exactly pictures of health, but all the dreadful disease, deformity and goitre seen elsewhere are entirely absent. The children, however, almost without exception, suffer from appalling spleens. It is possible that these Kachins in-breed less than others, and that their improved physique is due to this. Their wives come from the north, and from a variety of clans, such as Marip, Maran and N'Hkum. Like most extremely poor people, their marriage customs are extravagant. Many cattle, robes and gongs are demanded for a bride; but gongs, being scarce, are borrowed and passed on, and so circulate, leaving a wake of debt in their passage. Hkahku women are very striking, and of a type so marked and unusual that one would hardly take them for Kachins. Their dress also is peculiar, and consists of a cotton skirt, and over the breasts a shawl which leaves the shoulders bare except when a jacket is worn. Cigar-shaped ornaments of amber are carried in the ears.

The dress of the men too is distinctive—an open jacket, and a short, home-spun *loongyi* reaching only to the knee, except in front, where it falls rather low. Trousers, or *baumbis*, are never seen in these villages.

The turban, called *Bawm-bam*, is a short strip of silk tartan, and both the *loongyis* and blankets are often woven with a tartan design too. The haversack is small and curiously embroidered; and of course the Hkahku *dah* is square-ended, and rests in an open scabbard. In addition, a spear is often carried.

Outside many of the villages we found coffins which had lain in sheds, sometimes for over a year, awaiting burial. These coffins are made by hollowing logs, and are painted and decorated, and raised about four feet from the ground on bamboo trestles. This custom is observed if there is an unsettled feud, or (more often) if the relatives of the deceased are absent. It occurs in Bhamo too, but I have never actually seen coffins lying out before, and the habit is commoner here than usual. It is, no doubt, of Chinese origin.[2]

In one place we had the supreme luck to buy a lump of congealed "tiger's milk" for eight annas. This stuff is said to be of great medicinal value, especially for women with sore breasts. It looks rather like a knot of wood, but the inside is creamy in colour, and very hard. It is reputed to be dropped from the breasts of the female tiger and eaten by the cubs.

After leaving the Putao road we met only small villages for several days. It was soon evident from the shyness of the people that we should not get many recruits, and I could not even coax any lads or elders to visit Maymyo and have a look at things for themselves. The meetings, however, were pretty well attended, and the women were specially invited. In such cases, if the people's attention is seriously drawn to a new form of employment not hitherto imagined, the tour is not the complete failure it seems. The future results are often surprising; and after all an immediate response can hardly be expected from people many of whom have never been beyond N'Sop. Here, within sixty miles or so of a railway, folk are utterly primitive, and the world is still young. We had to talk down to the level of their experience, for the tale of pay and pensions was met with frank disbelief and yawns. The influence of recruiting on crops and pigs is of far greater consequence. One of their own parables was told with considerable effect—how a kind man tried to enrich a fool by stuffing a gourd with gold and giving it to him. But the fool swapped the gourd for a handful of rice, and his benefactor when he knew it exclaimed: "Even God couldn't help such an idiot." Hearing this, God decided to try himself, and put a bag of gold in the fool's path—but he passed by gazing stupidly up into the trees. Then God hung the bag in the trees, but the fool went by looking at his toes. So even God's benevolence was defeated. In terms of army pay, the moral of this story was easily understood by these simple folk.

This country is so little visited that the route given us was only approximately correct. Many villages could not be found, and others were mere hamlets of three or four houses. Ting Hkrai Ga was badly diseased.

They were hollowing a tiny coffin for one baby; and the mouth and face of another, who it seems had caught syphilis from its mother's breasts, was too pathetic and shocking to contemplate. We found Hkrai Man deserted because the *Nats* had been hostile; and Hka Chang, to which we diverted our march in consequence, is only a tiny place. The paths here are cruel, sometimes climbing ridges from which the scenery is beautiful, sometimes descending to dark forest streams which murmur over rocks, and form clear inviting pools, the invariable haunt of forktails and blue thrush. From the high places, where the villages are usually situated, the prospects are wide and beautiful. The views from Hka Chang, Manu Bum and Hting-graw are superb; but the country is really too completely smothered in jungle to be comfortable. Babblers revel in this undergrowth, and trogons, the gaudy birds of forest deeps, are plentiful. Blue-faced barbets are more numerous than usual, and the velvet-fronted nuthatch runs up and down the tree trunks. One of my Kachins shot a specimen of Gould's yellow-naped woodpecker, a green bulbul (*Chloropsis Hardwickii*), a jewel of emerald and turquoise-blue, and a yellow-backed sun-bird. The last is a lovely creature, iridescent blue on the head, rump and tail. The back is dull red, and below that is a small patch of yellow. The wings and breast are smoky black. Hornbills occur in crowds, particularly the great pied hornbill (with a black band on the tail), and Blyth's wreathed hornbill (with a pure white tail and green wings). In one place we found wooden models of the hornbill placed on a grave. On the whole, the birds in this area are disappointing. Perhaps the country is too thick and too low. I suppose we were never above 3000 feet.

The squirrel of these parts is a brown fellow with rich chestnut nose, paws and underparts. Zahkai the giant squirrel, occurs. Almost daily we saw gibbon and other apes and monkeys. And at night when man has carried in his wood and his water, and utters strange laughing noises, and sings till dawn to the girl of his choice round the glowing hearths, the road is given over to the tigers and deer. You can see the tracks of pad and hoof next morning in the dew-sodden clay.

At Hting-graw we passed into the true Sana country. *Taung Ok* Kin Raw Tu handed us over to *Taung Ok* Ma Gun, who had come out from Mogaung to meet us.[3] This day Kin Raw Tu received word of the death of one of his children. It is worthy of note that the messenger, who arrived overnight, did not give his news till the morning, so as not to disturb his friend's rest. Poor Kin Raw Tu expressed his grief by firing off his gun several times; and incidentally sent a bullet whining over my hut.

The paths now improved greatly. The streams were temporarily spanned with bamboo bridges; and matting sheds, which had served the Civil officer, were still in good condition. We were by this time only five miles from the base of the Hku-mung Bum range, which, as already mentioned, separates Sana from Kamaing and Hukong. One considerable waterfall is seen pouring down the mountains, and there is said to be another. The foot-hills are known as Hkat-mai Ga, and there the N'Sop river has its source. The people there are Marips, but the mountain barrier above is uninhabited. It is strange that immigrant Yawyins do not settle up there at 8000 feet, instead of suffering and deteriorating on the hot plains of Myitkyina.

The Lahtaws in these parts are Lahtaw Sharaw and Lahtaw Sina, who give their names to the villages of Sharaw and Sina. Sina is the headquarters of the area. This word *Sina*, and the fact that our first contact was with a quite unimportant people called *Sana*, are responsible for the entirely incorrect name "Sana" by which the country is known to us. It is properly called Hpung-ing Dung, or the "Lowlands of the Hpung-ing" river, because these low hills appear small from the higher ranges round about. The Hpung-ing river brawls past Sina, where we halted very pleasantly for a day. In the evening we heard the mussels whistling in the stream. These mussels (*kum-hpya*) are wrongly described in the dictionary as "a kind of lobster." It is not expected that the outraged reader will believe that mussels whistle, but this is a mysterious land, and it is a fact that *Taung Ok* Ma Gun, when he first heard them, mistook them for *Nats*, and wildly beat gongs and fired guns to silence them.

Hka-htum Bum is the home of our one and only Sana man, and here we got our first recruit, thus justifying once again the theory that we only need a footing to open out new fields. Here also lives *Duwa* Pang-lang Zau Jum. This man, and N'Tsin Bum Sin-gi, of the Triangle, were the only two elders who gave me their sincere support—and both were newly returned from a journey to meet the Prince of Wales. Their immediate response shows the educational value of travel. They had barely escaped with their lives in the motor traffic of Mandalay, which they described with agility, skipping right and left from imaginary cars. (On the whole, it is wonderful they survived.) They had seen a juggler catch glass balls on his ears and elbows, and they cherished the memory of a superb A.D.C. in golden *aiglets*, whom they took to be the future King-Emperor. (The future King-Emperor, as it happens, was in flannels.) Even the *Jaiwa* [4] was eclipsed by these tales, though he played his last cards, wore the wreck of a Cawnpore topee, and passed off on us the comedy of Adam and Eve as a bit of genuine Kachin mythology. Nothing, however, could resist the elements of enlightenment, and the *Jaiwa* retired in a huff, leaving us with two recruits.

We descended now to lower jungles and slept at M'Byen in a stately forest—the sort with dense shadows, gigantic fronds, trailing ropes of creeper, and a brawling stream which, incidentally, we had crossed twenty-four times. Here atlas and peacock butterflies, and a lovely blue dragon-fly, sun themselves on patches of warm mud; and here also the unholy blister-fly has his abode. In these parts we found a hive of extremely small bees called *Gatmai*. They are hardly three-sixteenths of an inch long.

Easy marches for another four days brought us to Shan and Burmese settlements on the plains, and to the railway at Namti, one station short of Mogaung. Thence we returned by train to Myitkyina.

NOTES

[1] *A Burmese Enchantment*, pp. 129 and 132.

[2] *A Burmese Enchantment*, p. 202.

[3] A *Taung Ok* is a small district official.

[4] A *Jaiwa* is a sort of High Priest.

CHAPTER XVII

AN ABODE OF FEAR

ONCE more we board the *Pathfinder*, this time to thread the marvellous Upper Defiles of the Irrawaddy which lie between Myitkyina and Bhamo. This evening the Irrawaddy presented itself in a new aspect, ruffled by wind and smoking under the lash of rain while a passing storm spent itself, leaving behind it a serene evening with double rainbows spanning the entire reach of river from Mankin to Waingmaw.

It is a whole day's steaming down-stream to Sinbo, along beautiful wide waterways of that tranquil loveliness typical of the Upper Irrawaddy. The river is wonderfully clear, and you can often see the sand and shingle racing by below, and in places it is so shallow at this season (February) that even a small launch like the *Pathfinder* has to pick her way with care through rocks and sand-bars. At Sinbo a range of hills confronts the Irrawaddy through which a passage is forced by way of the celebrated First, or Upper, Defile. At the entrance there is a wide "basin," now full of sand, where, in the rains, the flood-waters are held up and wildly disturbed by the sudden restraint put upon them.

The curious thing is that the Irrawaddy has voluntarily elected a difficult way through high ranges of metamorphic schists, while ten or twelve miles to the east there is a low, broad valley which it might have followed with perfect ease—the same valley as that in which, farther south, Bhamo is situated. The truth is that the river *did* in fact occupy that valley originally. At that time two tributaries descended from the obstructing hills, one flowing down the north slope and the other down the south. As both these tributaries cut away the country between them, the col which separated them was lowered until the Irrawaddy at high flood burst over it, and, hampered by lack of grade in the windings of its old bed, gladly seized and deepened the new channel. This plausible theory is expounded by J. M. Maclaren, and accepted by Mr Coggin Brown,[1] who adds: "The eroding of small streams which is responsible for such a case of piracy has been helped by those differential earth movements which we know to have effected this region within quite recent geological times." The passage of the Irrawaddy through the Second, or Middle, Defile (between Bhamo and Katha) is very likely due to similar causes.

The hills astride the defile are inhabited on both sides by Kachins. In the heart of the gorge there are also five villages occupied by a curious people called Hpön, of whose origin there has been considerable speculation. Some consider them to be of Burmese origin. They are, however, more probably Shans or Shan-Tayoks from China, and their language is possibly allied to Hkeun Shan. It is now dying out. The new generation does not use it much, and in a few decades it will disappear like so many other languages in Burma. The Hpöns have a tradition that they were once horse-breeders in Santa, whence they fled as the result of some persecution, and took refuge in these inaccessible regions.

The Upper Defile, though one of the most curious and beautiful sights of Burma, is rarely seen. A boat from Myitkyina carries mails twice a month to Sinbo, but there is no regular service through the gorges, which are therefore only accessible to those who can borrow a launch. Mr Leach, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner of Myitkyina, kindly placed his at my disposal. The Defile has a little Act of its own, regulating the hours of entry at either end, and prohibiting launches from traversing it after the gauge registers 25 feet above low-water mark.

The flood-level above the gorge at Sinbo, where the Irrawaddy is first checked and held back, is 80 to 100 feet. A rise of 80 feet in a single night has been recorded. It is difficult to realize this, since the vegetation line appears to be only about 40 feet above the river. However, such heights are deceptive; and, further, the lower jungle is temporarily submerged in the rains. We may confidently accept these extraordinary figures, since the rise *below* the gorge is officially notified as 60 feet, and opposite Bhamo, where the river is very broad, as 40 feet.

The Irrawaddy is half-a-mile wide above the passage, and a mile or more below it, but the defile itself is nowhere more than 150 yards across! In many places it closes in to 50 yards. This narrow channel runs through mountains 2500 to 3000 feet high for thirty miles, till it widens out at a point six or seven miles above Bhamo.

The usual fog detained us next morning, and it was ten o'clock before we entered the narrow portals of the gorge. At this season the Irrawaddy flows with perfect ease, its ripples sparkling in the morning sunshine. With a slight rise, however, the rolling of the steamer indicates the movement of strong currents. In February there is no difficulty whatever in navigation, and, indeed, shortly before our voyage a large dredger had been safely passed through. In flood, of course, the place is an inferno where nothing can live.

The most savage aspect of this defile is in the first six or eight miles at its upper end. It is here that the passage narrows to fifty yards between bastions of rocks. There are nowhere any cliffs, but the masses of rock which confine the river are sufficiently grand. In many places they form small islands. Reefs, half submerged, obstruct the passage; and appalling whirlpools set up behind breakwaters of rock. Behind such headlands, bays are worn back; while in other places where the waters fall slack sand-banks are piled up into the jungle. The river is here possibly 300 feet deep, but the bottom has never been found. Teak logs are everywhere stranded high above the water, wedged between rocks, or balanced on knife-edged ridges in the most extraordinary situations. The dry bed of a tributary, the Lingh Kyi Chaung, was choked with logs which had just failed to make their escape. Amidst wild desolation of rocks the waterway makes some sharp turns, but not many. The direct nature of the gorge from north to south is one of its peculiarities. The strange echoes of these rocks, and the sight of all sorts of wild animals on the banks, are features which belong only to quiet travel in a country boat.

The rocky grandeur of these reaches of the Irrawaddy, the tranquil reflections, and the deep shadows of the forest are all impressive enough. But the romance of this defile does not lie in that. Nor are there imposing cliffs. The river is imprisoned by bare masses of rock of no great height—iron-red, worn and broken into grim shapes in their conflict with the river. Above these the densely wooded hills rise with easy slopes. The true wonder of this place lies rather in the realization of that incredible tumult which occurs when the Irrawaddy in high flood has entered these iron walls, and rages like a wild beast entrapped. Probably no words can adequately express that fury, that frantic revolt of imprisoned waters, their dashing at the rocks, their rebound, their boiling in whirlpools, their maddened career along the rapids in that Abode of Fear.

. . . .

After escaping from these dreadful hills, the Irrawaddy immediately widens out into those stately waterways which are navigable for a thousand miles to the sea. Here is a new loveliness. The hills of Sinlum are reflected upon its placid waters. Schools of river-porpoise frolic at the confluence of the Taping. So we return at last to Bhamo, whence we set out upon this long pilgrimage through the Kachin Hills.

NOTE

[1] *Geological Survey of India*, Vol. XLIII., part iii., p. 179. December 1913.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE WAY OF ENLIGHTENMENT

TRAVELLING up and down Burma, nothing has impressed me more than the amount of highly specialized knowledge acquired by individuals, and lost with them. Some have studied history, others geology, botany or ornithology. Others have accumulated unique information regarding the language, legends and customs of obscure races. Much of all this is lost, alike in Burmese villages and suburban villas, and we are left to dig the foundations anew, instead of building where others left off. The literature at our disposal, after all these years of keen observation, is meagre and fragmentary, and the reason is that though a vast amount of information has been accumulated, it is not set down.

The truth of this must, I think, have impressed all observant travellers. There is need for system, and in this case system means not only observation, but *the record of observation*, so that it may survive. This is specially true just now when men are leaving the country after long service during which they have been in close touch with vital things. An effort is due to Burma if we love it. It requires Time, and Time is precisely what we can least afford in these busy days. But even leisure can be made with method. The need for system is apparent from the incoherent replies with which inquiry is met. Statements are often involved with outlandish names, obscured with irrelevant detail, and made on the assumption that local affairs are widely known. Information has to be drawn with judicious questions from men who are perhaps the sole repositories of valuable facts. Those who know least are so well misinformed, and those who know most are sometimes unable to express themselves, not knowing how to begin—a fact which shows the chaos in many well-stored minds, and the need for system in our own.

Few men of education are really incapable of writing. Simply, they are shy, or perhaps their ideas and impressions are in utter confusion. They forget that, even without genius, work may be readable if inspired with sympathy, sincerity and courage, especially if records are made on the spot before impressions are blunted. Style certainly responds to environment, and it will usually suffice to be just oneself—simple, direct, unlaboured, ingenuous. An effective rule in life, often neglected, is just this—Whatever you do, do it in the simplest possible way. The two duties of an author defined by R. L. Stevenson are truth and good spirit in treatment. To these must be added hard work and system. I think it is Jack London who says: "Keep a notebook. Travel with it, eat with it, sleep with it. Cheap paper is less perishable than grey matter." The great thing is to *begin*, to revise, and to reject remorselessly. That is Kipling's advice, and also Boileau's:

Polissez—le sans cesse et le repolissez :
Ajoutez quelquefois, et souvent effacez.

The casual record will fit together coherently in the end. It may be written, rewritten, arranged, rejected and disembowelled; but in the process information is made available. At the same time ideas are straightened out, facts are collected, and, as it were, indexed for our own future pleasure and benefit, and their value enhanced perhaps with sufficient imagination.

It is no doubt inevitable that a country with complex problems and varied interests, and withal a vast and an inaccessible country, should discourage the student with a sense of hopelessness. Our knowledge of Burma is never such that we can lay down a rule or arrive at a definite conclusion. Nevertheless, Burmese and British are ardently studying. Their study is born of love, and breeds an ever-increasing affection for this beautiful and mysterious land. In this lies the hope of future success and happiness; for observation, even exercised as a hobby, cultivates breadth of view. It creates a right atmosphere in which we may go forward harmoniously into the new world that has opened before us, a world that needs all the spirituality we can find to counterbalance its materialism.

It is sometimes asked: "But what is the use of studying little things? It is not essential to a successful career to observe birds, animals and obscure races. It is not really necessary to know how words are derived, how pagodas originated, or what is the meaning of Buddhism or Animism. All this is merely negative. It is of no real value, and there is no money in it."

As a matter of fact there is—but let that pass. The material point is that success in life depends on mental training, and the mind that has learned to grasp small things will automatically seize bigger ones when they come along. Observation simply means self-cultivation; and in the case of those who live and work in the East, and whose success depends on co-operation with the people, observation has a special bearing on their work and fortunes. Legend is the mirror of thought and emotion, wherein is reflected the true sentiment of a race. Believe me, *Nats* confer C.I.E.'s; and the way to preferment and honour is not *only* up office steps—though I admit that that road is the surest.

Success in dealing with men depends on the belief we develop in them and in the self-respect with which we inspire them and ourselves — and inspiration is based on knowledge. The personal factor is of utmost importance. Where one man fails, another with sympathy and confidence succeeds brilliantly. It all hinges on the ideal aimed at, and upon an earnest determination to reach it. Generosity and hopefulness bring their own reward. They are reciprocated, and a man who practises them, thinking no ill of others, lives a life of mental tranquillity. He stimulates confidence in those around him, and lives himself in a kindly, generous atmosphere of his own creation.

The influence of Study is humanizing. Routine tends to create merely mechanical action. The stuff we throw off mechanically serves its purpose no doubt, but it takes no root and is soon obliterated. The fruit of human sympathy, on the other hand, will endure. Success, after all, depends largely on the loyal support of others, and true loyalty is only won by some undefined element. If we analysed it, perhaps we should find it was *sympathy*. Study, more than anything else, corrects that deadly tendency to selfishness and indifference which we have acquired since we began to live in a world full of horror and unrest.

Research has not only a social, but a political value, because it develops understanding. In Burma, it is said, the chief bond between the people and Government is the Archæological Department. It is certainly true that the Burmese, unless their sanity is temporarily deranged by shallow politics, love their religion and monuments, and are drawn to those who show interest in them. The study of Burmese history, literature and psychology is the direct road to a Burman's heart. They require, of course, time and scholarship. Unfortunately the road to the brain and the purse is considered (wrongly) more important in these materialistic days. In a scientific age, philosophy, Buddhism, and all things that soften and humanize the beast in us are looked upon with mild contempt. An old and an experienced generation is passing away. The new generation, like well-bred terriers, is still obsessed with rats (or balls) to the exclusion of all else. It has to learn its lesson for itself, and is hampered by the overwhelming preoccupations of modern life. Its ideals are different. It lacks the sentiment and *noblesse oblige* of its predecessors, and war has trained it to materialism. We see with regret old bonds of friendship loosed, and sympathy alienated by indifference, or by the bitter controversies of our day. All this is deplorable but not irremediable, for, thank God, in Burma good-will exists.

Research encourages sympathy and understanding, and each of these qualities develops the other. Nothing cultivates sympathy like understanding; and nothing checks arrogance like a true appreciation of one's own weakness. When by long study we learn our appalling ignorance, we have then taken the first and the greatest step towards Enlightenment. The humility and breadth of mind so created affords the best possible basis for a community of aims. We learn that wisdom is achieved by listening rather than by talking, and that what men strive for are not really the things which matter.

And there is another special appeal in Burmese Research. There is virgin land to exploit. In almost any branch the explorer enjoys the delightful thrill of discovery. Apart from its material and political values, Burmese Research has a personal one. It affords rest and variety from which men return refreshed to their main duties. Exile from home becomes an enchantment, speeding the happy years, and enriching our store of pleasant memories.

CHAPTER XIX

CONCLUSION

IN these pages we have surveyed all the most important Kachin areas. We have travelled overland along the whole Sino-Burmese frontier from Lashio to Myitkyina, through Kodaung, Sinlum, Alaw Bum, Sima and Sadon, a distance of roughly 570 miles, thus filling in the gap between Hpimaw in the north and Keng Tung in the south, dealt with respectively in *A Burmese Enchantment* and *A Burmese Loneliness.*

Looking back one sees that the country is good, and that the people are true-hearted, though often sunk in ignorance, and covered with lumps and sores. And some live to four-score years, and some less, but the majority die before they are five years old. One sees on all sides superstition, disease, dirt and want, but in places bright spots where the people have begun to understand, and where they yearn for help and enlightenment.

Various measures have been adopted for their welfare, but after careful observation the following specially recommend themselves to me. We have to be content at first with essentials. These people need curing and teaching. The children need care, that they may live. All this requires men and money, but not a great deal of either. Hitherto little has been spent on the Kachins, and money might well be diverted from elsewhere. Expensive roads are needed from the plains into the hills; but, except for these, much may be done at small cost. As for men, there are many essential tasks that Kachins with six months' training could do for themselves. For instance, 10 per cent. of the sick are sick unto death. Let them die. But the manifold diseases of the remaining 90 per cent. only become aggravated or fatal from neglect. They merely require soap, hot water, disinfectants, worm-powders and injections, which do not need special skill to apply. But without *extensive* help in these elementary matters the race can hardly survive. As we cure the cattle, so let us cure the people.

As for schools, more are needed. But the army and the military police are also schools where the youth may be freely educated in all that is essential to manhood. No greater blessing has ever been conferred upon the Kachins than this military employment. They must be taught to recognize it.

The disease now rampant is undoubtedly due largely to bad housing. A beginning might be made by encouraging board floors, and by raising the buildings high enough to allow sun and air to reach the pig-wallows below. By establishing central saw-pits, and training and paying men to work them, and by giving timber and remitting taxes, this could be effected without irritation, since every house is pulled down and rebuilt after three or four years. Further, jungle should be cut clean away from the villages for some hundreds of yards, sparing, of course, valuable trees and bamboo. Fortunately unpopular sanitation is not necessary, since the pigs do all that has to be done. Curing, educating and housing, then, supported by active and persuasive propaganda, are the essentials.

Some of these measures have already been attempted locally, and in such places truly encouraging results have been achieved. The people have shown an eagerness for enlightenment that is touching. In those places a new hill-folk have come into being, who are useful, sturdy, reliable and loyal. This experience seems to invite a wider application of humane and progressive measures.

. . . .

The information gathered during three years' incessant recruiting and travel in all parts of Burma has appeared to me to be of some interest, but too extensive to deal with in one volume. The materials fall naturally under several heads—one of which refers to the Kachins, and is dealt with here. Another relates to the Burmese, Karens and Talaings of Burma Proper, and is being published simultaneously in *A Burmese Wonderland*.[1] In these days, and especially in a country so vast and complicated as Burma, it is essential to specialize, and I have not yet felt myself competent to enter upon the subject of Chins and Shans, whose awakening in the military sense is also worthy of attention.

I might have treated my subject without any reference to recruiting at all. On the other hand, early struggles are soon forgotten, and it seemed right to place on record the painful steps by which the races of Burma have won military status—not by easy methodical moves, but in all the distracting crises in the Great War. Further, and here I know many will agree with me, military service is closely related to the development of the races of Burma—is, in fact, almost essential to their enlightenment. It has worked a miracle for the Kachins. It is almost the only conceivable means of lifting the Chins out of barbarism. It is no less valuable to Burmans, Karens and Shans, who are highly civilized and cultured, but who need just that restraint and discipline that the army teaches.

Burma offers unrivalled opportunities for observation. Of those opportunities I have availed myself to the limit of my capacity; but in a country presenting obscure and difficult problems, which yield their secrets only to scholarship and patient research, observation does indeed depend, in a very peculiar degree, upon insight. It is here that the need to specialize becomes painfully evident, and grows as the years pass by. We may gather facts from books, and a deal of undigested information from persons, but to get to the heart of a people, to understand them, appreciate them, love them, and be loved, you must learn their speech. I believe the languages of Burma have never even been counted; and many are of such extreme difficulty that it takes years to acquire them even indifferently. Thus do we look upon the mirror darkly. Eyes we have for our travel, but see not; ears, and hear not. As we regard uncomprehendingly mountains of precious metal, so, to our lasting grief, we may fail to recognize other mines, and other kinds of valuable material lying unsuspected within reach.

Burma in a marked degree reserves her riches for those who prospect; and there is no country in the world which, in spite of material development, has guarded so jealously its spiritual treasure. "The thoughts of his heart, these are the wealth of a man," is a Burmese saying. We need not particularize. The Burman himself has from the first won our affection by a something undetermined beneath the surface. What it is we cannot exactly define; but it is valuable. As for the Kachins, there is nothing more amazing than to see a magnificent battalion of them, and then explore the abysmal darkness of their homes. There is a rich reward for study; and, as I said, there is a crying, urgent need for it after the interruptions of the Great War.

I have tried here to convey as simply as possible the ethnological features of this country, to describe some of its beautiful places, and to record the profound changes that the last few years have wrought. The subject is indeed worthy of attention. The confusion of races, their diversity of speech, character and development, the richness of their legend, the misty story of their migrations, and the romance of their distribution offer a field for research unrivalled, I imagine, in extent, interest and wonder.

Beneath it all is a philosophy; and the heart of all philosophy is simple. The fog that gathers round is merely the vapour of ignorance. The yearning of man for knowledge of past and future has enveloped his understanding in a darkness. But the object of our search is Enlightenment—and one so wide and lofty that we may recognize truth and cherish it. For us the Milky Way is truly the smoke of lovers' pyres. We have seen with our eyes the stiff-kneed goblin of the forest amongst the tree trunks. The *Nats* are kindly souls, illusive and furtive, but endowing our world with a delightful mystery. And the birds did *really* learn their dance in the Land of the Sun.

NOTE

[1] Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta.

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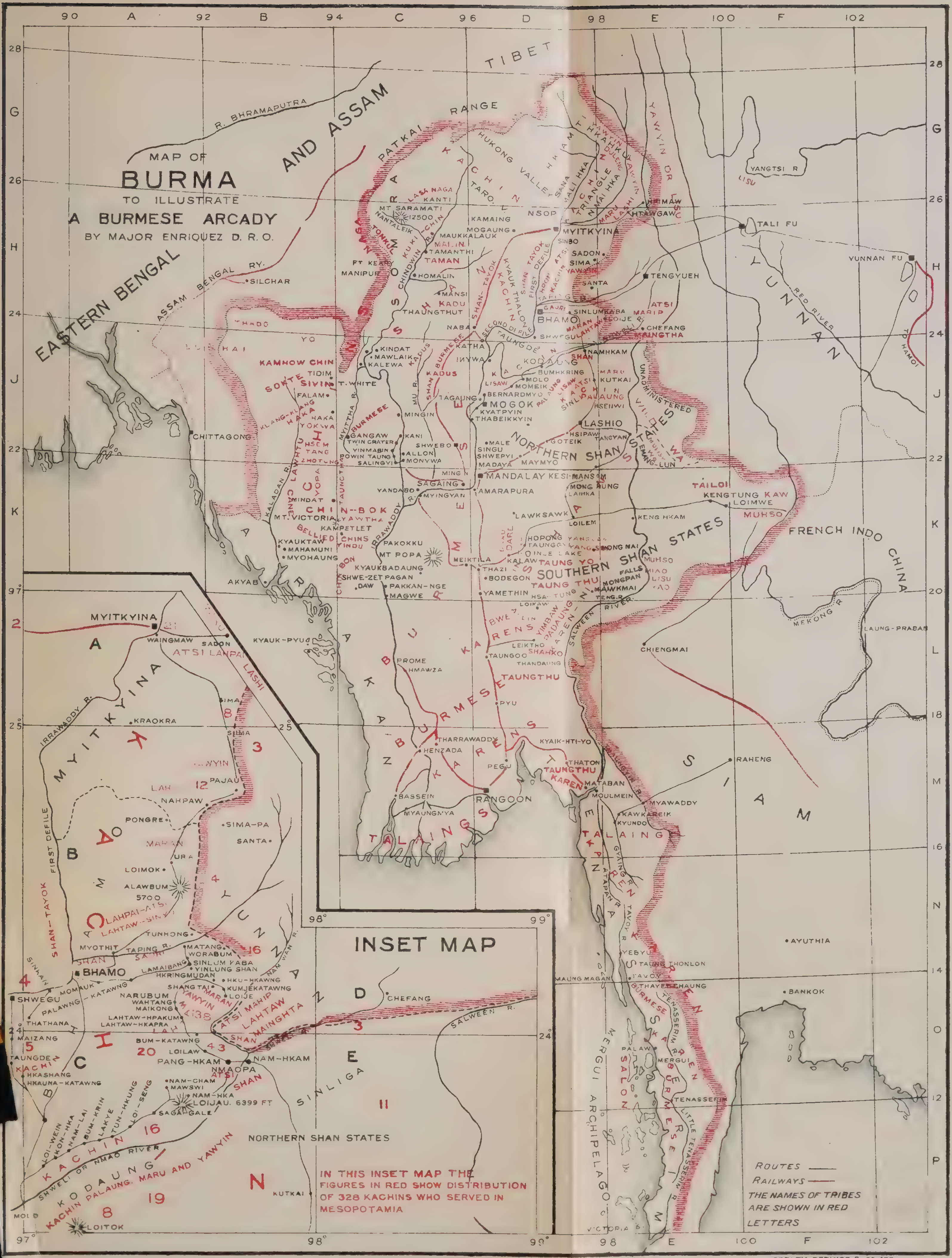

MAP OF
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A BURMESE ARCADY
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INSET MAP

IN THIS INSET MAP THE FIGURES IN RED SHOW DISTRIBUTION OF 328 KACHINS WHO SERVED IN MESOPOTAMIA

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